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**Spanish and Mexican Transitions to Democracy in a Comparative
Perspective: Contrasting Internationalisations**

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Para Juan Fernando –

*'He got up outta there, ran for hundreds of miles
He made it to the ocean, had a smoke in a tree
The wind rose up, set him down on his knee*

*A wave came crashing like a fist to the jaw
Delivered him wings, "Hey, look at me now"
Arms wide open with the sea as his floor*

*He's.. flying
Whole
High.. wide,
he's flying'*

Mike McCready and Eddie Vedder

Abstract

There is more to democratic transitions than elections and markets. This thesis is a comparative study between the internationalisation processes in Spain and Mexico and the interaction between these and the respective transitions to democracy in both countries.

The stark contrast between the institutional, political and sociocultural provisions in NAFTA and the EU – as well as the distinctly different considerations that shaped the strategies of international actors towards Spain and Mexico during their transitions to democracy – interacted in very distinctive ways with the processes of democratisation of Mexico and Spain respectively. Whilst an implicit democratic conditionality for membership into the European Community proved an incentive to Spain to democratise, NAFTA's lack of any political conditions proved an incentive for the Mexican regime to hold back on democracy. What is more, the social, economic and political consequences of internationalising through EEC membership had a positive democratic effect in Spain. The lack of any such provision in NAFTA represented a missed opportunity to support Mexico's democratic consolidation.

By using the examples of the EU (or EEC) and NAFTA, and the particular case studies of Spain and Mexico, I will contribute towards the field of democratisation theory by putting forward the idea that the way in which a country in transition to democracy internationalises can be an important factor in the success with which a country achieves the consolidation of democracy.

Preface

The theoretical, practical and even ethical analysis of democracy and democratisation has arguably been one of the most researched topics in comparative politics in the last 70 years, and almost certainly in the last quarter-century (Boix and Stokes, 2007: 9). With the end of World War II democracy went from being one of many forms of political organisation to being widely recognised as the preferred form of government for liberal-capitalist industrialised societies. Immediately after the breakdown of the Soviet Union and the subsequent democratisation of Central Europe, which was meant to signal, as famously hailed by Francis Fukuyama (1992), the end of the historical development of political systems, it seemed as if democracy was on track to becoming the only form of political organisation. The rapid increase in the number of countries that began a progression towards democracy since 1989 (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005: 176), which gave an unprecedented impetus to the ‘third wave of democratisation’ seemed to confirm the notion that the democratisation of the globe was only a matter of time. Regardless of how controversial this assumptions may now seem, the fact is that a succession of events around the globe between the mid 1970s and the late 1990s spurred an even greater interest in democratisation as an academic field. Important studies on democratisation, both theoretical and empirical, (Almond and Verba, 1963 and 1980; Diamond, Linz and Lipset, 1995; Huntington, 1991; Inglehart, 1997 and 2000; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005; Linz and Stepan, 1978, 1996; O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead, 1986a, 1986b and 1986c) added to the already well-established literature on the theory and practice of democracy and political systems (Dahl, 1971; Lipset, 1960 [1981]; Sartori, 1973; Schumpeter, 1942 [2011]).

However, despite the vast academic literature on the subject, we are not yet able to fully understand – let alone predict – how, why or when democracy will prevail; in fact, political science is far from even finding a consensus on what democracy is and what it is not. Even as theories of democracy become increasingly complex and the methodology increasingly accurate, the academic community is still far from reaching a consensus on any of the causes of democracy (Geddes, 2007: 317-319). The third wave of democratisation has only accentuated the difficulties political scientists face when explaining, predicting and defining democracy. Hence, democratisation studies remain at the fore of comparative politics. Recent events in the Arab world, the real threat of democratic regressions in Latin America and Africa, the sudden calls for ‘Real Democracy’¹ in some quarters of developed societies, the increasingly salient role international organisations have in the democratic politics of sovereign states, as well as questions over the possible emergence of a new non-democratic hegemon in the world stage

¹ The Occupy movement in the United States and Europe, and the 15-M movement in Spain are two good examples of such developments.

(i.e. China) and its prospects for democratisation, are all issues that remind us of the continuous relevance of democracy and democratisation studies.

As the study of democratisation enjoys some sort of a revival, this thesis embarks on a comparative analysis of two important cases of the 'third wave': Spain and Mexico. Although they are both important in their own right – Spain was one of the first democracies to be 'consolidated'² in this third wave and it is also considered by some as a catalyst for the democratic trend in Latin America, which, not at all unrelated, culminates with the transition to democracy in Mexico – I find the similarities in the circumstances surrounding their transitions as striking as their respective outcomes. Although I will be elucidating further on my reasons for comparing these two cases later on, I should accentuate at this point that more than a comparison between two cases of transition to democracy, this is a comparison of two projects of redefinition of a political system. These redefinitions are nowhere more evident than in the respective projects of internationalisation Spain and Mexico embarked on; and it is with the particularities of the European Union (EU) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in mind that I find the comparison between these two cases not only worthy of making for its strictly academic value but also for its potential to shed a light on the role internationalisation projects can play in transitions to democracy elsewhere. This research does not pretend to be an exhaustive comparison between every aspect of what are two very complex processes of democratisation – there is simply not enough time to do so – nor will I claim to develop new theories in the field of democratisation based on these two cases. I do intend, however, to develop a detailed comparison of the relationship between very unique cases of internationalisation and some very specific changes in the political, social, institutional and economic structures of both countries, which, as I will evidence, had an influence on the respective processes of democratisation. In so doing, I will develop a hypothesis about the interactions between internationalisation and democratisation that can hopefully help explain other cases. As said before, I am aware that a new theory of democratisation cannot be developed from the analysis of two case studies, but I do not see a reason why two specific cases cannot be used to develop a hypothesis on the workings of a very specific particular correlation. The goal of this thesis is not to explain every detail of democratisation or develop a new theory of democratisation. My goal is far more realistic; to explain how the transitions to

² It is worth mentioning here that, as will be discussed in further detail in this thesis, there is a growing concern regarding the use of a dichotomy between transition and consolidation due to the emergence of new regimes – particularly in Latin America and Asia – that, despite having begun a process of democratisation, seem to be stuck somewhere between democracy and authoritarianism. This new development has transformed the notion that transitions to democracy are processes that either end on consolidation or authoritarian regression; the concept of 'consolidated' transition no longer does, in my opinion, represent the reality of democratisation processes (Bejarano, 2011:6). I will, nevertheless, use the adjective 'consolidated' throughout this thesis in an attempt to simply portray to the reader that the Spanish transitions has been, in most accounts, far more successful than the Mexican transition.

democracy in Spain and Mexico were, to an extent, shaped by their respective internationalisation projects.

This thesis is mainly divided in two parts. In the first part I will address issues that are related to the theory of democracy and the different approaches to democratisation; as such, I will analyse and criticise the current literature on democratic studies and the methodology of comparative politics. As it is my aim to contribute towards the field of democratisation studies, I feel it is only appropriate for me to identify and discuss the main models offered in contemporary political science in order to place my research in this academic spectrum. The second part of the thesis will deal with the case studies. In an attempt to familiarise the reader with the two cases, I will briefly examine the key differences and similarities between the two projects of internationalisation, and then I will analyse how the particularities of NAFTA and the European Economic Community (EEC)/EU, help us understand the changes, or in some case lack of change, in some specific areas of the political systems of Spain and Mexico.

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We have all had hundreds of goals, ideas and plans. Yet not all of them come to fruition. My original plan (age 11) to score the winning goal of the Champions League final playing for The Arsenal was, unfortunately, frustrated by my complete lack of anything resembling a footballing talent. My backup plan (age 13) of becoming an international rock superstar was similarly frustrated by my distinct inability to keep a tune. Yet, had I had the same help and support when pursuing those 'goals' as I have had during my PhD studies, there is no doubt I would have been considerably closer to becoming a rock and roll superstar or an Arsenal legend.

First of all, I have to thank my supervisory team for their incredible support. My main supervisor Nagore Calvo not only patiently guided me through this process, but also was very supportive at a personal level. Nagore always made me feel comfortable with my research and in my own ability, which made this process incredibly enjoyable and rewarding. What is more, Nagore's guidance was not only fundamental when developing the analysis of the case studies, but her expertise in other areas of political science helped me broaden my research. I always felt this was a real team effort and for that I am extremely grateful. As my secondary supervisor, Adrian Pearce was also incredibly generous with his time, his support and his very timely corrections; I am particularly grateful for his help correcting many of my very own 'Hispanisms'. He also deserves special credit for his help with the historical component of this thesis and overall, had it not been for him, this thesis would have lacked much focus, depth and breadth. Both Nagore and Adrian did a lot more than merely providing academic guidance and advice. Their help in my (more or less constant) efforts to secure funding, participate in research activities, publish my findings and early professional development was of paramount importance. Probably just as important, however, was their support at a personal level; particularly when difficult personal circumstances threatened the progression of my work. I cannot thank them enough for their support.

At institutional level I have to thank everyone at the Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies Department, as well as the School of Art's and Humanities. The multidisciplinary nature of the SPLAS Department was what initially attracted me to King's College London and, I must admit, the experience of completing a PhD in Social Sciences in what is mainly a Humanities Department, although not without its challenges, has been exceptionally rewarding. The whole Department thrives in multidisciplinary and I feel grateful to the whole Department, and to Catherine Boyle in particular, for giving me the opportunity and support to fully take part in this amalgam of disciplines, research projects and interests. What is more, the School of Arts and Humanities provided me with a number of generous grants to complete fieldwork and participate in international conferences. In the same vein, I would also like to thank Santander

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There is nothing I can say here that could even come close to portraying how lucky I feel to have a family that has always supported me. Although it was sometimes hard to explain to them why a thirty year old had to spend most of his time in a library, they remained supportive nonetheless. My siblings René and Amine have both showed me by example how success has different faces; but that, in any case, it takes effort, commitment and bravery to achieve it. My parents have both been an inspiration at a personal and professional level, and, besides the obvious, I could not have achieved anything without them. Thank you for always believing in me.

Despite the many people that have made this possible, this PhD is dedicated, however, to two people. First of all, I dedicate this thesis to my father. He has been my supporter, benefactor and motivator for most of my life. Secondly, this thesis is dedicated to my father's brother. In academia we aspire to shape the world by developing ideas that can, hopefully, make it a better place. There are those, however, that are willing to pay the ultimate price in an attempt to make the world – and in particular my country – a fairer, safer and more just place. Juan Fernando Calderón de la Barca was one of these brave few; he was also my uncle, my friend and my family. Above all, however, the example he set in his short life will always be my greatest motivation.

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CHAPTER I. Introduction: Methodology and the Case Studies

Prior to dealing with the particular issues that concern this research project, I believe it is necessary to present a fairly detailed structural overview of the thesis. Since this is a comparative study that aims at formulating working hypotheses, as well as analysing the already very complex processes of internationalisation and democratisation, the structure of the project is of paramount importance. Hence, I will use this introductory chapter to describe the main elements of the research and present the overall structure of this thesis. As I agree with the view that ‘for the scientific study of politics to progress then research needs to be related to theory’ (Peters, 2008: 45), I will attempt to offer a clear explanation of the relationship between the theory and reality of my case studies throughout the whole thesis; but it is in this opening chapter that the reader will get a detailed account of how this will be done.

In this first chapter I will address some of the essential issues that, I believe, every comparative study should cover in its earlier stages. In the very first instance I will develop a theoretical framework on comparative politics that will, hopefully, explain why this study is, above all, worthy of being made; I will then present some arguments to back my selection of case studies as well as ‘introducing’ both cases to the reader; I will present my main hypothesis; I will discuss the scope of my research; and finally I will offer a general description of the chapters of the thesis.

1.1 On the methodology

Before embarking on the specific questions my thesis will be tackling, I think it is important to answer two apparently straightforward questions: why compare? And, for that matter, why compare ‘only’ two cases?

1.1.1 Why compare? And Why ‘only’ two cases?

The role of comparison in political science is closely linked with the idea of inference in social science. As one of the major social sciences, political science faces the same main methodological limitation as economics or sociology, i.e. the impossibility of recreating social phenomena in a controlled environment. Therefore the role of inference is vital if political science is to be considered, indeed, a science. It has been pointed out that the essential objective of the study of politics has to be ‘the creation of knowledge, defined as inferences or generalisations about politics drawn from evidence’ (Almond, 1996: 52); in political science, the only evidence we have are the observable events that have already taken place. Obviously, in an ideal world the experimental method would be used when trying to develop any sort of scientific explanations, however, there are many obvious practical and even ethical impediments that make the use of the experimental method in political science uncommon (Lijphart, 1971:

683-684). The only way then that we can advance inferences and generalisations from observed events without being able to replicate them is by comparing political systems – be it different countries at a particular time, different countries at different times or a particular country at different times – in order to advance hypotheses on specific outcomes. In this sense, comparative politics becomes the only way for political science to develop theories that come close to explaining political phenomena. Unlike political philosophy, for instance, comparative politics has to embark on the task of separating between the ideals and the realities. In simpler words, comparison is ‘a basic methodological concept, not merely a convenient term vaguely symbolizing the focus of one’s research interests’ (Kalleberg, 1966: 72); obviously then, in political science, a study is comparative not because of its area of interest (i.e. different political systems) but because of the methodology that is used to develop hypotheses.

In the particular case of democratisation studies, the comparative method is the only realistic way in which political scientists can establish, if not causal relationships, at least some basic dynamics that are at the core of democratic developments. However, we must be aware that the comparative method is not the only method of comparative politics but only one of the methods in political science – the others being the statistical, experimental and the single case study method (Lijphart, 1971: 682); but although the statistical method has been widely used in comparative politics in the last 40 years, the comparative method is still what distinguishes comparative politics from other areas of political science.

If comparison is the main methodological tool of comparative politics, then why not compare as many political systems as possible to explain democratisation? One could certainly make the argument that the theory has to follow the history; ‘theories ought to be inferred from facts and not the other way around’ (Fukuyama, 2011: 24). At the same time, although ‘the comparative method is not the equivalent of the experimental method but only a very imperfect substitute’ (Lijphart, 1971: 685), it is nonetheless clear that the statistical method is better suited for the analysis of correlations as it allows for the control of specific variables. If the key distinguishable element of comparative politics *vis a vis* other disciplines in political science is its ability to control, then ‘its generalisations have to be checked against “all cases”’ (Sartori, 1970: 1035). However, it is clear to me that democratisation theory finds itself at a theoretical and methodological crossroad. The appearance of comprehensive survey studies in a large number of countries transformed the way comparative politics and democratisation theories were being generated and tested¹. Since technological advances in communication facilitated the collecting, accessing and analysing of increasingly large data sets, large-n studies have come

¹ Probably the best-known examples of these types of large-n studies are the works by Arend Lijphart on democratic institutions (1984 and 1999), and Ronald Inglehart’s work (1988, 1990 and 1997) on value changes and modernisation.

to dominate comparative research. Nonetheless, despite the clear benefits of having multiple resources available to carry out large-n cross-national studies, we are probably not any closer today than we were twenty years ago of predicting democracy with certainty (Geddes, 2007: 318-319). Undoubtedly, the theories explaining democratisation have become increasingly complex as larger datasets from a larger number of countries have allowed political scientists to test, to almost absolute certainty, many of the hypotheses presented in the post-war era. This availability of resources, however, has led to a decline in hypothesis generating through case or small-n studies – in the same way for example that Almond and Verba (1963 [1989]) developed their ground breaking hypothesis of democratisation almost half a century ago – in favour of hypothesis testing. One could be forgiven for agreeing with the notion that in contemporary comparative politics ‘the conjectural element of social science is usually dismissed as a matter of guesswork, inspiration or luck – a leap of faith, and hence a poor subject for methodological reflection’; but, as John Gerring points out (2007: 98), ‘there are two moments of empirical research, a light bulb moment and sceptical moment’. Without getting carried away, and understanding the obvious limitations of a comparison between two cases, this thesis will attempt to be more of a ‘light bulb moment’ rather than a ‘sceptical moment’.

It was Seymour Martin Lipset who, in an attempt to criticise the state of affairs of comparative politics more than 50 years ago, first warned about the perils of focusing exclusively on discrediting theories (1959: 70). He explained how the existence of some deviant cases in democratisation theory is not enough to discredit a whole hypothesis; hence the exercise of putting together high quality research with the sole objective of discrediting a rival hypothesis can be rendered as rather pointless. He claimed that just as ‘the existence of some wealthy socialists or poor conservatives’ does not demonstrate (or, at least, did not in 1959) that economic factors play no part in determining political preference, the existence of some deviant cases in democratisation theory should not be used as irrefutable evidence that a given hypothesis is false (*ibid*). On the other hand, one has to admit that democracy is probably the most intricate way of organising what is already a very complex invention, i.e. the modern state; as such, disregarding deviant cases as mere ‘exceptions to the rule’² in an attempt to confirm one’s hypothesis can be counterproductive. The principles of multicausality and endogeneity provide political scientists with the methodological tools to avoid the conundrum between compulsive rejection of hypothesis and continuous disregard of deviant cases as mere flukes.

In this sense, if we had to draw a single lesson from the last decades of increasingly large and complex cross-national studies, it would have to be that context matters. Regardless of how far

² Inglehart and Welzel (2005) for example, explain the lack of democratic institutions in some oil-rich countries in the Middle East by separating between different kinds of socioeconomic development; they also explain the lack of secular values in the United States – a supposedly necessary variable for democratic mass values – as a mere historical irregularity.

the methodology of comparative politics – or indeed political science in general – advances we should not realistically expect to generate and prove hypotheses of causality in a single sweep. Perhaps a theory cannot be developed from a single case study but a working hypothesis can emerge from comparing a small number of cases³. The inclination towards large-n studies is not necessarily related to specific methodological advantages, as much as it is to certain technological advances in methodology (e.g. gathering, accessing and analysing data) and to changes in the discipline of comparative politics as such. Since the transformation in the political landscape following the Second World War, the object of study of political science as a whole has become broader. This is down not only to the fact that the world became increasingly politicised – i.e. the realm of what is political grew together with the expansion of the welfare state – but it is also related to the continuous increase in the number of units of analysis in the discipline (Sartori, 1970: 1034). The expansion of the object of study meant political science became increasingly prominent, whilst the increase in the number of units of analysis (states) provided a wider array of cases to be compared. If you couple this general development in political science with the facilities offered by new technologies, it is not hard to understand why a clear predilection for causality and large-n studies was developed. All of a sudden, political scientists in the field of comparative politics had the resources to draw standards of methods and theory from the physical, ‘paradigmatic’ sciences (*ibid*: 1033). The possibility to develop ‘generalisations and laws of the “if... then” type’ (*ibid*: 1035) took over the realm of comparative politics. In this brave new world of “if... then” theories, large-n studies have almost become the norm; ‘the more case studies one has, the less intensely each one is studied and the more confident one is in the representativeness (of some broader population), the more likely one is to describe them as a sample rather than a series of case studies’ (Gerring, 2007: 96). In this general trend in comparative politics towards causality, the term ‘sample’ is always more appealing than the term ‘case study’.

Despite its many benefits, large-n studies are still not a perfect substitute for the experimental method. Admittedly, the ability to control variables (although this term is used rather lightly in some cases) and to establish some levels of causality does give large-n studies the edge when theorising generalisations. It is also true that – no matter how rigorous the methodology of a focused comparison (i.e. two or three case studies) is – the problem of ‘too many variables and too few countries cannot be sidestepped’ (Hague and Harrop, 2007: 92). In fact, ‘if at all possible one should generally use the statistical (or perhaps even the experimental) method instead of the weaker comparative method’ (Lijphart, 1971: 685). However, the fact that the

³ Although not very common in contemporary comparative politics, single case study analyses are not unheard of. Robert Putnam (1993), for instance, convincingly presented his theory of a causal link between social capital and democracy by analysing only the case of modern Italy. His is a comparative study because it takes Northern and Southern Italy as different units of study, but that still leaves us with a comparative study in democratisation theory with ‘only’ two case studies.

‘value of a focused comparison lies in the journey rather than the destination’ (Hague and Harrop, 2007: 92) should not put the researcher off from embarking on what can be ‘one of the more theory-driven forms of comparative analysis’ (Peters, 1998: 62). The benefit of statistical work is that, as a wider sample is analysed, there can be a higher level of certainty on specific correlations. Therefore, if we want to determine specific causal agents of democracy, a statistical approach that looks at the correlation between x and y in a vast number of countries would be ideal. Thus such approach has been very popular in the study of democratisation and democracies in general since the behavioural revolution of the 1950s (Almond and Verba, 1963; Huntington, 1991; Inglehart, 1988 and 2000; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005; Lijphart, 1999; Lipset, 1959; Przeworski and Limongi, 1997). Similarly to what happened after the Second World War with comparative politics in general, the development of new technologies and the advent of statistical analysis, coupled with the dramatic increase in the number of democratic systems, has led to an increase in the prominence of democratisation studies and a switch to statistical methodology within the field. However, in strictly methodological terms, the ‘comparative method resembles the statistical method in all respects but one. The crucial difference is that the number of cases it deals with is too small to permit systematic controls by means of partial correlations’ (Lijphart, 1971: 684). Hence, although the comparative method – understood by Lijphart as basically small- n comparisons – is clearly less apt than the statistical method – understood as large- n studies – at establishing causal correlations, small- n studies should not be overlooked. There are times, for example, when the limited availability of cases makes the use of large- n studies redundant. What would have been the point, for instance, of applying the statistical method to analyse the emergence of the first democracies during the earlier stages of industrialisation? Surely a less intense statistical analysis of the few democracies that existed in 1850 would be far less enlightening than an intensive analysis of the few cases available.

My proposed research is an ideal example of when a focused (or small- n) comparison is better suited than a large- n study. Since there are only a very few examples of institutionalised internationalisation processes, and even fewer that have coincided with the development of democratic institutions at domestic level, we have a rather limited pool of case studies. If on top of this we consider that there have arguably only been two attempts of regional integration between highly developed, consolidated democracies with less developed, democratising countries – the European and North American regionalisation projects – our options become even more limited. Then, if we are to develop the idea that specific projects of internationalisation matter in the process of democratisation, and in particular when these work as an incentive for democratisation, we should compare the two cases of regional integration that attempted integration of consolidated democracies with democratising countries. Despite an apparent downturn in regional integration, we could argue that as internationalisation processes

become more complex and institutionalised, for instance, they offer opportunities to be analysed empirically as mechanisms of causality; thus political theory could avoid becoming a repetitive exercise of hypothesis rejecting and fall into the trap Lipset warned us of over 50 years ago.

As said before, small-n studies have some clear advantages but also some obvious limitations. It is clear that more correlations between variables can be better observed from using large-n statistical studies, albeit it remains contested how effective these types of studies can be in establishing both causality and the mechanisms of causality – i.e. not only that x causes y but how it is that x causes y . In a mechanism or process-based approach to democratisation, ‘democratisation is not a product but a special condition of public politics’ (Tilly, 2001: 33). In other words, democracy is not the result of linear causal flows but is rather the result of a specific correlation between citizens (subjects) and governments. As such, this correlation can be changed by a number of factors and processes, which constitute specific mechanisms that alter the way citizens and governments relate to each other. A change that leads towards a protected consultation of the citizens (subjects) is what is understood as democratisation (*ibid*: 31-32). Furthermore, these changes can be caused by a number of exogenous processes that include relational (e.g. brokerage), environmental (e.g. resource depletion or, in the case of this thesis, changes in the access to international resources and opportunities) and cognitive (actor choices) mechanisms/processes (*ibid*: 25-34). Mechanism-based explanations of democratisation are therefore shy from being analyses of case-specific macro-social political transformations (following the ‘classical tradition’ of Barrington Moore (1966 [1993]) or Lipset and Rokkan (1967)), but are certainly far more wide-ranging than agency or modernisation based theories of democratisation. As such, at least a basic account of how some of the most common factors that can influence democratisation (institutional development, power distribution, interaction between main social groups, etc.) should be analysed. Since this is a thesis focused on casual mechanisms rather than causal correlations (or inferences) or propensities, a small-n research design makes even more sense.

This is not to say, of course, that large-n statistical comparisons are less suitable than small-n comparisons when trying to explain political phenomena; my defence of case study and small-n analyses relates to what I perceive to be an over-reliance on statistical research. There is no reason not to take full advantage of technological and theoretical advances to develop new theories. I argue that both types of studies are just as important for the advancement of quasi-scientific knowledge in political science, and so I believe it would be better to avoid defining ourselves and our research based solely on the methodological approach utilised to reach testable theories. In fact, we should bear in mind that whilst case studies ‘allow scholars to explore causal mechanisms [...] large-n comparisons allow them to identify causal effects’ (Boix and Stokes, 2007: 4). It is hard enough for researchers to avoid the risk of letting the use

of a particular theory to become a set of blinders that leads the outcome of the research; to allow methodological approaches (research design in particular) to become yet another set of blinders would be a devastating problem for any research project (Peters, 2008: 47). As far as possible, students of comparative politics should try to engage with multiple theories and multiple methodological approaches; if one lets the theory dictate the methodology it will, in all likelihood, dictate the result of the research as well. As Guy Peters points out, once we 'choose our theoretical approach and develop a methodological design based on that theoretical choice, most people find it all too easy to find support for that approach' (*ibid*). This simple and elementary statement – in fact Guy Peters warns about these perils in a fairly introductory volume to comparative politics – is not always easy to follow. With this in mind, I will strive to utilise a number of theoretical approaches.

It is not enough, however, to be aware of the many hazards inherent in choosing a methodology and a theoretical approach; one has to actually avoid them. One such peril is the, perhaps natural, tendency to put forward speculative generalisations. As said before, it is hard enough to avoid the temptation, when dealing with large-n studies, of either ignoring or giving too much importance to deviant cases. In a similar vein, one has to be careful not to exaggerate the validity of a working hypothesis that has been generated from analysing a small number of case studies and try to make it a general rule. This can be an issue simply because it is often 'easier to establish the veracity of a causal relationship pertaining to a single case (or a small number of cases) than for a larger set of cases' (Gerring, 2007: 98). In the context of this thesis, it would be a gross exaggeration to claim that – based on two cases – processes of internationalisation always (or even generally) dictate the outcome of democratisation processes. Nevertheless, 'x-y' relationships in comparative political science are a 'reduction from the complexities of the real world' (Keman, 2008: 66), and it is somehow obvious that these complexities are easier to 'control' the fewer cases one is analysing. Comparative politics should no longer be only about comparing evidence in order to tell if a relationship exists and, if it does, if it is a causal relationship (*ibid*). We need to bare in mind that

'It is now well established that causal arguments depend not only on measuring causal effects, but also on the identification of causal mechanisms. X must be connected to Y in a plausible fashion; otherwise it is unclear whether a pattern of covariation is truly causal in nature, or what the causal interaction might be' (Gerring, 2007: 102).

Mechanisms of causality can be best analysed in small-n studies such as this one. Hence, the objective of this thesis is not to prove that internationalisation projects dictate democratisation processes, or vice versa, but rather this thesis analyses how specific internationalisation projects can shape – rather than make or cause – democratisation processes.

There are also other challenges faced by any comparative study regardless of the number of cases, variables or causal correlations analysed. First of all, one should always aim at developing 'a middle-range theory'; that is a theory that 'avoids the pitfalls both of excessive abstraction (the vice of economists) and excessive particularism (the problem of many historians and anthropologists)' (Fukuyama, 2011: 24). This is a particularly hard trap to avoid when dealing with correlations (be them directly causal or not); on the one hand there is the risk of, as I have said before, putting forward shaky generalisations in an overzealous attempt to establish causality. Whilst on the other hand there is the very real risk of analysing everything but explaining nothing. This work will attempt, by looking at a number of variables (processes of decentralisation, influences on elite behaviour and calculations, socioeconomic development, attitudinal/societal changes, and other institutional changes), to analyse the cases of Spain and Mexico with enough thoroughness to be able to establish clear correlations without going as far as claiming outright causality.

Another difficulty common to all comparative studies is the 'how far back' problem. This problem is obviously related to the issue of finding a 'middle-range theory' but has to be dealt with on its own. Even if a study focuses on a handful of variables and/or causal relationships (e.g. socioeconomic development causes democratisation) there is still the risk of going too far back or not going far back enough. There is certainly a need to study the '*causes of effects*' as well as '*effects of causes*' (Przeworski, 2007: 148) but – unless one has almost limitless resources, time and energy – there has to be a limit. It is sensible to acknowledge that 'any causal factors one adduces for a given development are themselves caused by prior conditions that extend backward in time in endless regression' (Fukuyama 2011: 23); but only if one has in mind rewriting the Bible (as Francis Fukuyama seems to attempt in over a thousand pages spread in two different volumes) would it be possible to indulge in such analyses. Thus, this thesis has to have a clear temporal limitation (which I discuss further on) as well as a methodological. Nevertheless, bearing in mind that political development does not take place in a historical vacuum or in conveniently organised time-periods, reference to events outside these chronological limits is unavoidable. This thesis will not pretend to be an exhaustive analysis of an 'endless backward progression' but rather, recognising that all causes are effects themselves, it will strive to offer a broad explanation of the structural limitations that shaped these two transitions to democracy⁴.

A final methodological consideration to be kept in mind when developing any sort of

⁴ Without following the strict path-dependency approach inherent in historical institutionalism, the idea is to borrow some of its principles. Ana María Bejarano's approach to 'structured contingency' fits well with my own approach that 'the pre-existing structures and institutions do not predetermine results, but they do indeed condition them' (2011: 13).

comparative study is that of confusing the method with the object. If, then, this is to be avoided, attention has to be paid not to confuse, as I have said before, a 'basic methodological concept' with a 'convenient term vaguely symbolising the focus of one's research' (Kalleberg, 1966:2). The tendency to do so can lead to an overreliance on defining concepts rather than developing theories; this is not necessarily a problem if you are writing a methodological note, but if the aim of the research is to develop theories then 'too much emphasis on definitions only leads to sterile verbalism, to the development of "conceptual frameworks" as opposed to theories' (*ibid*: 72). Having said this, the definition of key concepts and the development of a conceptual framework are necessary steps towards developing a theory; just as political institutions do not develop in a vacuum, theories that explain them cannot emerge in a theoretical void. The second chapter of this thesis will therefore pay its due attention to the defining of key concepts (internationalisation, democracy, democratisation, political culture, amongst others), as well as examining the main theories that explain democracy in general, and a comprehensive overview of the literature that deals with the case studies from a variety of perspectives. This thesis will not, however, shy away from developing working hypotheses based on these concepts and theories, thus avoiding the above mentioned 'sterile verbalism'.

1.1.2 The object of comparison

As just discussed, comparing in political science is, for the most part, the method by which we are able to develop hypotheses through inference and generalisation, and small-n studies are not only a valid tool of comparison but also unavoidable in certain cases where the sample pool is limited – such as when comparing institutionalised projects of internationalisation or regional integration – then the exercise of case study selection becomes increasingly important. This is simply because we are not aiming at putting together a 'sample' that will prove a specific causal relationship – if that were the case the way forward would be to include as many cases as methodologically possible. This thesis is a defined study that will analyse correlations between two wider processes. This type of study, therefore, implies a typical small-n research design of few cases many variables. Albeit the use of strict dichotomies in research methodology is no longer that common, a thesis of these characteristics would tend to gravitate towards a most similar system design; however, there is more to it than this narrow description. Moving on from the methodological debate though, one has to keep in mind that, as mentioned before, in political science theories should, as far as possible, be inferred from facts and not the other way around (Fukuyama, 2011: 24). The exercise of case selection should adhere, at least to some extent, to this simple premise; developing a hypothesis should follow the thorough analysis of the case studies. This does not mean, however, that one has to select random cases and hope for the best; there has to be a process of inference that precedes the case selection. The analysis of the selected case studies has to follow the 'light bulb moment' – or the genesis of a probable

hypothesis – if one is to avoid the risk of using the case studies as the only focus of the research rather than as a methodological tool that will help us develop a working hypothesis. Certainly in a small-n comparative study, the thorough analysis of the case studies is of paramount importance but this should not lead the study away from its main goal: the further development of political theory; the main goal should always be in sight. With this in mind, the case selection has to follow the selection of a basic number of parameters (which will then become variables) that are being analysed.

In the case of this thesis, the very fundamental objective of the analysis is to explore if and how specific internationalisation projects interact with parallel processes of democratisation. With this basic idea in mind, I will analyse the specific ways in which internationalisation (for now understood as very specific forms of regional integration but it is a concept that will be discussed in depth further on) interacted with specific institutional, social and political elements of the process of democratisation. These are, in essence, the very basic parameters that will inform the process of case selection. With the now widely accepted premise in mind that ‘context matters’, I will analyse the way in which internationalisation interacted with democratic developments at three basic levels: the supposed correlation between socioeconomic development and democracy, the linkage-leverage dichotomy and the national elites, and the domestic political structures and societal values. More than a random approach, these three basic levels correlate with – as will be analysed in the second chapter – the three basic theoretical approaches to democratisation: modernisation theory, elite theory/institutionalism and the political culture school.

1.2 The case studies

Comparative studies of democratic transitions are not uncommon. However, the case of the Spanish transition is arguably the single most studied case of the third wave and, despite some recent worrying developments, the Spanish transition is still broadly regarded as something of a ‘paradigmatic case’ (Waisman, 2005: 1). Not so long ago academics and commentators alike were unequivocal when hailing the Spanish transition’s success; to say that virtually no one doubted the ‘sustainability of Spanish democracy’ (Hopkin, 2005: 6) is no exaggeration. Recent events, however, suggest that this ‘sustainability’ – as with other democracies in Western Europe – is no longer completely beyond doubt⁵. Regardless, Spain’s transition to democracy has been compared to the transitions in Portugal and Greece, ex-communist Central and Eastern European countries, and the Latin American transitions in the last quarter of the twentieth

⁵ The latest Democracy Index from the Economist Intelligence Unit places Spain just one spot above the ‘flawed democracies’ category and suggests a clear decline in the ‘quality’ of Spanish democracy. Spain, however, is not the only country in Western Europe presenting this negative trend; France, Portugal, Italy and Greece all fall below the line that divides ‘full democracies’ with the rest of the regimes.

century (Colomer, 1991; Holman, 1995; McDonough *et al*, 1998b; Montero, 2001a and 2001b; Ortega Ortiz, 2001 and 2008; Wiarda, 1989 and 1996). Even if not all of these comparisons have been grounded on straightforward similarities such as geographical proximity, institutional similarities or a historical connection, it seems that the southern European transitions (and the Spanish in particular) have set the bar against which all third wave democracies have to measure. This is mainly due to the chronology of the third wave – which started in Southern Europe and then moved to Latin America, Africa and finally post-communist Europe – but also to the relative success of the Spanish transition. Without resting importance to the equally significant transitions in Portugal and Greece, it is clear to me that the transition to democracy of a middle-size country with a lack of a significant democratic tradition as was Spain, gave a greater impetus to the democratic trend worldwide. Although not without its problems, the Spanish transition succeeded in developing a strong market economy within the framework of integration into Europe, raising the level of welfare indicators to Western European levels, establishing a robust democracy (despite being marred by ETA terrorism, the 1981 coup attempt and some economic crises) (Waisman, 2005: 1-3), internationalising its bourgeoisie and transforming the identity of Spanish society⁶.

On the other hand, Mexico's transition is, at best, yet to be completed. Denise Dresser (2005) explains that Mexico's initial transition to an electoral democracy was a long process accomplished through many electoral reforms taking no less than 30 years. In this sense, Mexico's transition fits the bill of what is commonly known as a 'protracted transition', i.e. a process that resembles 'a war of attrition' between the regime and the opposition parties over the 'microinstitutional foundations of the transition' (Eisendstadt, 2000: 4). This type of transition is rather different from the model of elite-driven transition developed by Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter (1986a) – and, as we will see in the next chapter, supported by many others – and thus presents different challenges. This 'voted transition', as described by Mauricio Merino (2003), achieved a rather limited success. Hence, although from 1997 onwards elections in Mexico are free, fair and overseen by a truly independent arbiter – the Federal Electoral Institute (*Instituto Federal Electoral* - IFE) – the institutions established by the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) were never really transformed. The fifth chapter of this thesis will analyse how the limited influence of the United States in Mexico's democratisation supported the protracted nature of the transition and, as such, did not help correct many of the issues inherent in this type of democratisation. In a nutshell though, we could say that Mexico now has a democratically elected president at the top of a diluted

⁶ A quick glance at the Eruobarometers and World Values Surveys from the last years shows that the views and attitudes towards democracy, the rule of law, interpersonal trust, etc. of the majority of Spanish society has changed drastically since the end of the dictatorship.

presidential system that was not designed to be a liberal democracy⁷; democratic governance in Mexico is 'limited by a weakened executive, a divided Congress, a party system made-up by political parties in disarray and a decentralised political geography in which the PRI still has a big influence'⁸ (Dresser, 2005: 355). Besides these institutional shortcomings, there are also those who take things further and speak of a failed transition based on growing levels of corruption, impunity, a collapsed judicial system, *cacicazgos* and the return of the PRI's old-guard to the presidency (Aristegui, 2009: 9). Finally, as will be discussed in the sixth chapter, there are also clear concerns that in Mexico there is a strong correlation – and one that is not all that easy to explain – between its authoritarian past and its democratic prospects (Middlebrook, 2004: 28). Be it because of a lack of a comprehensive state reform, the re-emergence of the PRI, an incredibly faulty judicial system or the legacies of authoritarian rule, it is hard to disagree with the notion that Mexico's transition has not been as successful as the Spanish one (this notion will be discussed in detail in the next chapter).

The clear differences in the outcome of the transitions, along with the fact that the Spanish transition has become something of a transition 'model', are two good enough reasons to broadly justify a comparison. However, there are more significant motives to justify the selection of Spain and Mexico as case studies. Although throughout the thesis there will be detailed justifications of specific comparisons, for now it is important to set some general common characteristics that facilitate a comparison between the transitions to democracy in the two countries. Firstly, it is hard to disagree with the assumption that both countries share some significant cultural traits (religion, language, cultural habits and some common history) and that at some point they arguably shared a pre-democratic culture that was 'hampered not only by the pre-authoritarian regimes but also by cultural traditions that exalted monism, uncritical acquiescence of religious and political dogmas and intolerance' (Waisman, 2005: viii). This cultural legacy will be analysed in further detail in the sixth chapter. Secondly, it is also evident that Spain and Mexico had very limited experience with democracy before their respective transitions at the end of last century. The Spanish Second Republic was a turbulent and short-lived experience with democracy, which failed to create any sort of long-standing democratic institutions. Conversely, despite claims that the PRI regime had some periods of near-democratic functioning⁹ during the 1930s and 1940s when it was able to accommodate and

⁷ I will provide a wider definition of democracy in the second chapter but for now, by liberal democracy I simply mean the system of majority rule limited by minority rights (Sartori, 1995), in which certain institutional checks and balances limit the executive.

⁸ 'El futuro de la gobernabilidad democrática estará limitado y constituido por un ejecutivo restringido, un Congreso dividido, un sistema partidista edificado sobre partidos en desorden y una geografía política descentralizada en la cual el PRI todavía ejerce una gran influencia'.

⁹ In fact, the PRI's 'official' version of Mexico's history, as Lorenzo Meyer boldly stated during the heyday of the regime, promoted the notion that 'the Porfiriato [...] was only an unfortunate parenthesis in the democratic progress of the country' (1977: 3). The reality though is that neither the revolutionary

accept contestation (even in the electoral arena), and achieved high degrees of civil participation (Davies and Brachet-Marquez, 1997: 86-119), it is now clear that the PRI regime never achieved the 'consolidation' of democratic norms.

Although it is open to debate if the Second Republic had any impact in Spain's democratic culture or if the PRI regime was ever anything else than the 'perfect dictatorship' – as famously described by Mario Vargas Llosa (*EL Pais*, 1/9/1990) – what is clear is that neither Spain or Mexico had any significant experience with democracy, or the socio-historical characteristics usually linked with democratic societies. Finally, at least for some time, the authoritarian regimes in Spain and Mexico drew sufficient legitimacy to survive from their record in achieving political stability and sustained economic growth. Although this is a characteristic commonly found in authoritarian regimes elsewhere, the success of authoritarianism in Spain and Mexico in establishing order and stability was particularly impressive because of events that preceded the regimes. The Franco regime, on the one hand, followed the bloody schism of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and survived the desperate situation of ostracism after World War II. The PRI regime, on the other hand, followed the traumatic affair that was the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), the near annihilation of the country's economic output and a period that was characterised by Mexico's volatile relationship with the United States. Under these circumstances, the success of both regimes in stabilising Spain and Mexico was a huge source of legitimacy. What is more, although these were not the only authoritarian regimes claiming to be different from everything else, their relative success did allow both regimes to ascertain a sense of being unique.

Despite these similarities, there are also many significant differences between the two cases. Leaving aside the actual outcome of the transition, the most striking difference has to be the very composition of the undemocratic regimes that preceded democracy; whilst Spain was under an authoritarian fascistic military dictatorship, Mexico was under the hegemonic grip of a self-proclaimed 'revolutionary', nationalist and self-serving political machine dominated by civilian leadership. Admittedly, though, these definitions are not as clear cut as they seem: the Franco regime was not as fascist as seen by many from the outside – Franco himself promoted the argument that whatever support he gave Hitler was forced out of him by Nazi Germany (Liedtke, 1999: 231) – and the PRI regime was not as revolutionary as it claimed to be. Nevertheless, the ideological and organisational differences between the two regimes were so significant that the Mexican PRI government never recognised the Franco regime. At the same time, the PRI regime was a civilian organisation which managed to (rather successfully) limit the interference of the military with government affairs, was bound by an unbreakable no re-

regime that followed nor the decades of political turmoil that preceded it can be described as anything resembling a representative democracy.

election rule, managed to incorporate the interests of the vast majority of the population without having to directly antagonise with any specific group or interest¹⁰, and which prided itself from a leftist secular tradition that emerged directly from a revolutionary movement¹¹. As a postrevolutionary type of authoritarianism, the PRI regime shared many of the characteristics found in similar regimes elsewhere but not necessarily in Franco's. The PRI, unlike the Franco regime, was characterised by the prominence of mass actors in government (labour and the peasantry in the Mexican case), reliance by the elites on the ideology of the revolution to gain legitimacy, and – most important of all – the existence of a hegemonic single party that institutionalised mass mobilisation rather than stop it all together (Middlebrook, 1995: 6-8).

On the other hand, Franco's regime found its legitimacy in a civil war which by definition put it in direct antagonism with a large sector of the citizenry, it was clearly a conservative regime (both looking inwards and outwards), it was a military and militaristic regime, and it resorted to violence, intimidation and repression far more often than the Mexican regime ever did. Besides the ideological (if they ever had an ideology) and structural differences, however, the most relevant difference for the purpose of this thesis is that the PRI regime in Mexico may have been far more institutionalised than the Franco regime ever was. In truth, this does help explain why the Spanish transition to democracy was achieved quicker than the Mexican (Ortega Ortiz, 2001 and 2008). Yet, the nature of the preceding regime is not enough to predict the outcome of a country's transition to democracy; while there seems to be a certain correlation between institutional evolutions and democracy (Payne, 1993; Thelen, 1999), it stops short of being a proved causal relationship (Geddes, 2007: 317). Therefore, the foundations for the comparison for this thesis are not found neither in the shared culture (whether this is real or imagined), the similarities of the preceding undemocratic regimes or, for obvious reason, geographical proximity.

¹⁰ It has been argued (Levy and Bruhn, 2006; Davies and Brachet-Marquez, 1996) that the very strength of the regime was its ability to accommodate citizens' demands via incentives rather than repression. The regime successfully included and looked after the interests (or gave the impression of doing so) of trade unions, peasant groups, industrialists, elites, the middle class, the military and even the church.

'For several decades both the party and Mexico's citizenry seemed relatively content with party institutions and practices that were constantly revamped to accommodate the latest demands. By implementing these changes Mexico's PRI could therefore claim legitimacy as we as some approximation of democracy.'
(Davies and Brachet-Marquez, 1996: 109)

¹¹ As Levy and Bruhn (2006: 188-192) point out, this ideological tradition was most commonly invoked in foreign policy issues at the expense of directly antagonising with the wishes of the United States. This was an exercise in defiance which helped the government look more leftist for the leftists at home and which reasserted the regime's 'independent' credentials. Although the regime was everything but revolutionary at home, 'to dismiss the notion of genuine conviction is to indulge in a hypercynicism which is both unfair and inaccurate' (188) when analysing the regime's dealing of the Cuban revolution, the Chilean coup of 1973 or even the recognition of the Spanish Republican government in exile.

Notwithstanding the very clear differences in the regimes that preceded democracy and the concerns about their explanatory value for democratisation, comparisons between the Mexican – or countless others in Latin America – and the Spanish transition¹² have been carried out consistently both in academic and non-academic circles. This obviously has much to do with the evident sociocultural similarities between the Latin American region and Spain, as well as with the reputation of the Spanish transition as a great success worthy of being imitated elsewhere. The current comparison however, although clearly facilitated by these conjectural similarities, is based on a very specific feature shared by both transitions: the internationalisation of some domestic politics and the importance both countries gave to international considerations whilst embarking on democratic changes. The fact that both countries regarded accession into a larger association of states as a key element in their transition processes is, without a doubt, a very distinctive characteristic of both Spanish and Mexican transitions.

I should at this point make it clear that I am aware that the European project of 1986 was by no means the same as NAFTA; it is clear that Spain joined a group of states which had a much more ambitious plan of integration than the United States, Canada and Mexico ever did. The differences and similarities in their evolutions and characteristics will be analysed in greater detail in the third chapter, as I will present a more comprehensive framework for the comparison. For now it is important to acknowledge, however, that the way in which internationalisation shaped the structural contingencies within which Spain and Mexico transited to democracy followed a similar dynamic. As I will discuss in chapters three, five and six both countries regarded accession into a larger ‘union’ of states as a way to strengthen certain institutions or attitudes that were key for their development. The Spanish elites and electorate were aware that accession into Europe would very much ensure the survival of democracy as well as strengthen their economic position; ‘to the Iberians “Europe” implie[d] cultural, political and psychological interconnections as well as economic ones’ (Wiarda, 1989: 175). Although there is little evidence to suggest that the Mexican government of Carlos Salinas had a similarly democratic agenda, the proposal of NAFTA was a clear move to engage in a completely new model of development, in which a democratic government seemed, with the benefit of hindsight, an almost inevitable side effect. This is not to say that, as has been suggested before, NAFTA is directly or solely responsible for ‘unleashing forces’ that ‘democratised Mexico’ (Pastor, 2011: xv). Yet, whether it was actively looking for it or as a by-product of a different process, both countries took a path towards democratisation within the context of internationalisation.

¹² As Waisman points out ‘contemporary Latin American press is full of invidious references to Spain’s accession to the club of rich nations and to traits of the Spanish political transition, such as the role of King Juan Carlos or the Moncloa Pact’ (2005: 1).

Otto Holman explains that Europe was such a key element in the transitions of Spain, Portugal and Greece that any comparison between them ‘would have to take the “European aspirations” of these countries as a primary... point of departure’ (Holman 1995: 4). The same can be said about Mexico in relation with NAFTA; any comparison between Spain and Mexico has to take their individual international aspirations as a point of departure. The ‘internationalisation of domestic politics’ in Spain has been widely discussed (see Farrell, 2005; Holman, 1995; Story, 1995: 29-30) and it is generally accepted that Spanish accession into Europe was regarded as the main objective of Spanish foreign policy in the years following transition. Although accession into the European Community (and other Western alliances) was not a new aspiration of the democratic regime, only after Franco’s death was it possible to predict the end of international ostracism. The transition government in Spain and the first socialist government of Felipe González were willing and able to do what Franco’s regime had not: subordinate internal policies to international objectives. Although Mexico’s pursue of a free trade agreement with the United States and Canada was not intended as a tool for democratisation, the reality is that within the context of NAFTA the whole structure of the Mexican political system was transformed. In my view, the Mexican integration into the international system can hardly be overestimated; in Mexico ‘national development is defined as integration into the world, specifically and spectacularly including unprecedented integration with the United States’ (Levy and Bruhn, 2006:194). NAFTA was the pinnacle of a set of economic and political reforms that interacted with the democratisation process in Mexico. It is within this context of democratisation and regional integration that this comparison is carried out.

The main reason, therefore, to use Spain and Mexico as case studies is that they both embarked on processes that led to democratisation within a context of internationalisation. They also did so by joining completely different projects. A comparison between Spain and other nations that also joined the European project whilst democratising (such as Greece, Portugal, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, and the rest of post-communist Europe) would certainly be of less use if we were trying to analyse the correlation between internationalisation projects and democratisation. Even though a strict causal correlation is not trying to be established, there is a need to consider democratisation as a dependent variable and internationalisation as an independent variable. With this in mind, one must look at cases in which different internationalisation projects produced different democratic outcomes. In other words, what would be the point of comparing two cases with similar outcomes in the dependent variable (democracy) and a similar independent variable (integration with Europe)?

In simple statistical terms, then, our independent variable (internationalisation) partially explains the differences in the outcomes of the democratic transition of both countries. In other words, despite their many similarities at the moment of commencing their transition to

democracy in culture, historical experience, level of socioeconomic development, geographical proximity to more developed and more democratic nations, and many other indicators that suggest social similarities, the difference in the outcomes of their democratic transition can be explained, to an extent, by the differences in their projects of internationalisation. As I have said before though, this thesis does not pretend to put forward a simple monocausal model for democratisation; rather, what I strive to demonstrate is that contrasting levels of success in the democratic transitions of Spain and Mexico can be explained, to an extent – along with the differences in the preceding regimes – by the differences in the variable to be analysed. It is not the same to be in ‘the good neighbourhood’ (Waisman, 2005: 9) participating in the European integration project, than to be neighbouring the world’s largest super-power who has no need, desire or will to pledge to any sort of social or political organisation that could be perceived – no matter how desperately false this perception may be (Pastor, 2011: 12) – as a challenge to its sovereignty.

As said before, I completely understand that,

‘whilst the EU is a political and economic union in which the principles of solidarity and social cohesion are present in their treaties; NAFTA, on the contrary, is a free trade agreement that lacks any explicit political or social objectives and any social cohesion instruments at institutional level similar to those the EU has.’¹³ (Royo, 2004: 530).

Yet, as I have briefly mentioned and as it will be explained throughout this thesis, the integration processes in Spain and Mexico were key parts of the social and institutional transitions to democracy; it was internationalisation that forced both countries to embark on a process of political and social self-examination and self-rediscovery and deal with issues such as nationality, citizenship, ethnicity, social policies, political parties and many others (*ibid*: 538). What is more, there are other interesting similarities and points of convergence (which will be discussed in detail in the third chapter) that can help us justify a comparison between NAFTA and the EU. This is especially true if we recognise that the EEC that Spain applied to join in June 1977 was a very different organisation to today’s enlarged and troubled EU. In any case, if we understand that Spain joining the EEC and Mexico joining NAFTA were key factors in their attempts to democratise, then we can assume that analysing these processes will help us understand the differences in outcomes in both cases. The fact that both countries embarked on internationalisation processes aimed at ending years of autarchy and ostracism, and which ended

¹³ ‘La UE y el TLCAN tienen objetivos muy diferentes [...] Por ejemplo, la UE es una unión política y económica en la cual los principios de solidaridad y cohesión social están presentes en los tratados. El TLCAN, por el contrario, es un acuerdo de libre comercio que carece de objetivos políticos o sociales explícitos y de capacidad e instrumentos de cohesión social a nivel institucional como los de la UE’

up being central to their democratisation attempts, makes them ideal case studies for my research.

1.2.1 Scope and reach of the project

Some chronological boundaries are essential in any comparative study. However, neither transitions to democracy nor regional integration processes are spontaneous events that can be easily placed within strict temporal structures. Whatever our view of democracy may be, few would argue that democratisation is anything else than a process. This process may be led by mere pragmatic calculations from the elites, it may be caused and shaped by socio-economic development, or it may be spurred by historical and cultural traits specific to a society, but it is almost universally accepted that democratisation is a process. The evolutionary nature of democracy, as that of any other political process, means that to study democracy one must study a temporal progression; political cultures (and mass values in general), institutional changes, changes in elite behaviour and socioeconomic development can only be appreciated by analysing data from different periods. This is not to say, however, that democratisation is a strictly linear process, but rather that we need to analyse a clear chronological progression if we are to explain it. At the same time, internationalisation is also a process, albeit one which is easier to place in a specific timeframe. The main reason to set clear chronological limits, though, is the need to avoid the danger of this study degenerating into the 'endless chronological regression' discussed earlier. Since this study deals, to some extent, with issues relating to causal relationships, it is of paramount importance to set up limits to the study of causes as effects, or risk taking back the scope of the research all the way back to the beginning of time. Although not entirely arbitrary, the 'cut-off' point has to be, to an extent, a decision of the researcher based on methodological, theoretical and practical considerations.

Taking all of the above under consideration and bearing in mind that both countries embarked on their respective attempts to democratise at different times, I have set two different and comprehensive timeframes. In the case of Spain I will focus my research on the period from the beginning of the liberalisation reforms carried by the Franco regime in 1959 (marked by the regime's Stabilisation Plan) and the first term under the Partido Popular (PP) between 1996 and 2000 – which coincided with Spain's second Presidency of the Council of the EU in 1995. Although we could argue that the comprehensive political transformation of the Spanish state that led to the institutional dismantling of the regime did not truly begin until Franco's death allowed certain reformists to take decisive action to change the regime, there is little doubt that the conditions that made political evolution possible started to develop in the 1960s. The 1959 Stabilisation Plan paved the way not only for democratisation to take place, but also for the eventual integration into Europe by introducing much needed economic reforms. The second

Presidency of Spain in 1995 and José María Aznar's first term in power may not seem as such relevant events – as far as Spain's history of democratisation goes of course – as the 1978 Constitutional Referendum, the failure of the attempted coup in 1981 or even Spain's accession into the EEC in 1986. However, although the new democratic regime seemed to be safely in place and delivering on many of its promises by this time, Spain's 1995 presidency cemented Spain's place in Europe; it was the Spanish government who was setting the pace for the EU's external relations, it took a leading role in the widening and deepening of the Union, and was comfortable enough to challenge the old European powers in Europe (Torreblanca, 2001). Spain's comfortable position in Europe was, in more ways than one, the end of Spain's process of 'catching up' with integration and the end of its internationalisation. In a similar vein, following Adam's Przeworski's well-known description of democracy as a 'system in which parties lose elections' and in which 'there are periodic winners and losers' (1991: 10), we should place the end of the democratisation process in Spain on the eventual electoral defeat of the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE) and a peaceful transfer of power to a centre-right party.

Mexico's transition to democracy is considerably harder to place chronologically. In the case of Mexico it is not only hard to say where the process ends (there is no clear consensus as whether it has ended, when it will end or, indeed, if it will ever be completed) but also where it beginnings. For some there was no real transition to democracy but only an improvement of a somehow dysfunctional democracy (Davies and Brachet-Marquez, 1997), but besides these isolated views there seems to be a consensus that Mexico began a process of transition to democracy but has failed to secure its success. The many challenges facing Mexico's democracy will be analysed in detail throughout this thesis, but for now let us just say that the main problem when trying to encapsulate Mexico's transition into a specific timeframe is that the electoral arena has been the ground where most battles have been fought (Eisenstadt, 2001; Merino, 2003). Since the student movement of 1968, almost every other election was followed by some electoral concession made by the regime in an effort to accommodate political rivals and improve its democratic credentials. These successive reforms, however, although important, never really threatened the rule of the PRI that had most of the state's resources and an enormous corporatist network at its disposal. It was not until 1988 that there was an actual electoral challenge to the dominant party by a leftist movement headed by the former PRI reformer (and son of former Mexican President Lázaro Cárdenas) Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas and which, it is widely believed, was only survived thanks to a mixture of fraud and intimidation. The 1988 presidential race and controversial win of Carlos Salinas (a staunch neoliberal educated in the US) did, however, represent a clear change in economic policy and marks the beginning of the long process leading to the signing of NAFTA. Although the 1988 election in itself was a step back rather than forward, it did give the opportunity for the conservative

Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) to participate in the electoral reforms, become a participative opposition, 'negotiate' recognition to opposition governments in some states and strengthen its position as the main alternative to the PRI. For these reasons I would argue that 1988 marks the beginning of the double process of democratisation and internationalisation.

Where the processes of democratisation and internationalisation in Mexico end (if they have been completed) is a question with no straightforward answer. The ratification of NAFTA in the US Congress in November 1993 by a margin of 34 votes marked, according to one of Mexico's chief negotiators of the Treaty, the end of Mexico's 'exceptionalism' (as described by Luis de la Calle Pardo, 2010) but only the beginning of its process of internationalisation. There have certainly been many controversies surrounding NAFTA and its implementation, which will be discussed elsewhere in this thesis. However, it suffices to say here that NAFTA clearly falls short as a benchmark for integration; in many respects social, economic, cultural and even political integration between Mexico and the United States has already surpassed NAFTA's original provisions. Despite its shortcomings, however, the full implementation of NAFTA exemplifies Mexico's clear commitment to internationalisation as an economic and political strategy. On the democratisation front there is no easy way to describe where Mexico is in this process. The 1994 and 1996 reforms of the IFE, which has been hailed by many international observers as an exemplary electoral institution (the IFE, for example, offered support, training and supervision to the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq to organise the elections of an Assembly in that country (*Nexos* 1/8/2004)), clearly represent a milestone in the electoral democratisation of the country. The same can be said of the first PAN presidential victory in 2000, when power finally escaped the grip of the PRI in what are widely regarded as free and fair elections. However, Vicente Fox and his PAN government failed to push through convincing reforms that would widen and strengthen the democratic order (especially on issues regarding the tax system, the political restructuring of the state, a convincing reform in energy policy, media regulation, the judicial system and security). Regardless of the contentious nature of the 2006 presidential elections, which did damage the reputation of the IFE and the Electoral Tribunal (*Tribunal Electoral del Poder Judicial de la Federación* - TEPJF) within a considerable sector of the electorate (primarily amongst the supporters of the defeated candidate Andrés Manuel López Obrador), I agree with the notion that the 2006 presidential elections, and the role the electoral institutions played in resolving the controversies surrounding it, represented the final maturing of Mexican electoral democracy (Domínguez *et al.*, 2009). Yet, as will be discussed later, there is more to democracy than elections. Therefore, since the democratisation process has clearly not been completed, and since there is little evidence to suggest that Mexico is nearing a democratic 'consolidation', this thesis will engage with recent developments in Mexico as part of its continuous struggle towards democracy.

There are two final observations that I consider necessary to include in this section. First of all, although these broad chronological limits have the objective of helping us define the phenomena under analysis, these are by no means strict or immovable boundaries. The third chapter, for instance, will briefly cover a wider period in an attempt not only to familiarise the reader with the historical evolution of both internationalisation projects, but also with the objective of painting a general picture of the terrain to be explored in detail. Similarly, particularly with the Spanish case, reference to events that fall outside these strict chronological barriers will be made. The objective of establishing a chronological structure for this analysis is not to raise barriers but rather to help clarify the phenomena under analysis.

Secondly, it may come as a surprise to the reader to realise that despite the fact that the Mexican transition has been a protracted process that is being built by long and intricate negotiations between political forces, within the electoral and institutional arenas, and which has been going on for more than 45 years, the period under analysis in this thesis is generally more reduced than that under study in the Spanish case. I am well aware that there have been eight more Constitutional reforms to Mexico's electoral system since the first electoral reform of 1946 and the latest in 2007. Until 1977, however, all the reforms carried out (1946, 1951 and 1973) were aimed at strengthening the authoritarian nature of the regime – the 1946 reform, for example, aimed at subordinating the electoral authorities to the executive branch – rather than weakening it (Valdés Zurita, 2013: 147). Even if, admittedly, the 1977 and 1987 reforms did represent steps in the direction of furthering representation, these reforms had the goal of ensuring the participation of a loyal opposition and were not intended to represent a serious challenge to the PRI's hegemony. It was not until the 1990 reform established a more or less independent electoral organisation (the IFE) that democratic reforms were actually starting to take place, and it is not until the 1996 reforms that we can actually speak of the beginning of a period of institutional transition (in mere electoral terms) towards democracy (*ibid*: 148). This is why, although not ignoring the important developments that take place during the 1960s (such as the 1968 student movement) and the 1970s, I focus my research on the last 20 to 25 years.

What is more, although Spain's democratisation was achieved in 'record time' (Encarnación, 2001:61) – in itself a factor that explains its greater success compared to Mexico's transition – there is little doubt that Spain's struggle to join the process of European integration – which defines its internationalisation strategy – has clearly been a long and arduous process. Although the Spanish transition was achieved relatively quickly, its internationalisation strategy – a key element of this research – has been a process delayed by many circumstances. As will be discussed in the fourth and fifth chapters, the path of Spanish integration with Europe began much before it applied for membership in 1977. Mexico's internationalisation strategy, on the

other hand, is relatively recent (mid 1980s) and has developed at a blistering pace. This explains why this thesis may, in some instances, focus on a broader temporal space in the Spanish case.

1.3 Description of the thesis' structure

This first introductory chapter has presented a basic justification of this thesis; it has engaged with the methodological debate and put forward clear arguments that support the use of small-n projects as a valid – albeit sometimes neglected – tool that aids comparative politics in the development of theories. Here I have also presented some of the basic reasons that justify the selection of Spain and Mexico as case studies, and how this comparison will be constructed; this chapter has presented some of the main research questions and the basic hypothesis – i.e. that internationalisation projects (the way a country relates and interacts with other countries bilaterally and/or as part of the international arena) can act as ‘mechanisms of causality’ of parallel processes of democratisation. At the very basic level, this chapter has been both an explanation of this project as well as a justification of the project – this justification has been developed from both practical and theoretical perspectives; I have described here why this comparison is relevant and also why a ‘hypothesis-generating’ study (Lijphart, 1971) can be developed from comparing ‘only’ two case studies.

The second chapter of the thesis will present a breakdown of the main theoretical aspects. After all, the main objective of this project is to contribute towards the broad discussion on democratisation theory. In order to achieve this goal, this thesis has to be placed within the existing literature. The second chapter, thus, presents a comprehensive summary of the main literature and theories pertaining to the different aspects of this thesis, as well as identifying the appropriate definitions for the main concepts to be analysed. As I have stated before, the precise definition of concepts and framing of the theory is of particular importance for any hypothesis-generating research in political science; it is important to avoid the risk, by focusing exclusively on the particularities of the case studies, of ending up with a research that says a lot but explains too little. In order to contribute towards the theory, it has to be clear what that theory is. At the same time, a thorough analysis of the existing theories and sources is of particular importance for this project because of the contrasting amounts of literature available for the different aspects that make up this thesis. On the one hand there is a broad amount of literature available on democratisation theory and, specially, on the Spanish transition to democracy. Similarly, there are a number of recent studies that focus on the international dimension of democratisation, and even some that deal with the role the international context played in the transition to democracy in Spain (Alvárez de Miranda, 2003; Pridham, 1991; Story, 1995; Story and Pollack, 1991; Whitehead, 1996). On the other hand, there has been – bar a few notable exceptions (including Jacqueline Mazza's work (2001), and some sections of Aguayo Quezada

(2010a) and Domínguez and Fernández de Castro (2009)) – a lot less written on this subject regarding the Mexican case. The very welcomed surge in the works dealing with democracy promotion and the role external factors play in democratisation (Barany and Moser, 2009; Levitsky and Way, 2010; Lindberg 2009; Youngs, 2010) needs to be complemented, in my view, with focused comparisons that explained how these two dimensions interact. At the same time, it would be impossible for me to cover the entire range of sources available on democratisation studies, democracy promotion, methodology, internationalisation, the transition to democracy in Spain and the transition to democracy in Mexico; hence, the second chapter will function as a ‘filter’ for the literature to be used and justify why this thesis focuses on specific sources.

The second chapter will also present and explain the main theories to be utilised as analytical tools. This chapter engages fully with the debate surrounding democratisation theory, and the main question of causality; the analysis of the different approaches to democratisation to be presented will make use of my own classification of the different approaches based precisely on the issue of causality. The detailed analysis and broad categorisation of the different schools of democratisation theory serves a very specific purpose. Throughout this thesis, I will explain how internationalisation has interacted with the key variables that are emphasised (as agents of regime change) by the different theories of democratisation. Hence, before presenting an analysis of how the projects of internationalisation influenced the elites, the institutions, the socioeconomic development and the political cultures in Spain and Mexico, it is necessary to understand why all of the above are relevant in the study of democratisation. Here I will also further develop my assessment of the new approaches to hypothesis generation in democratic theory and present an analysis of some of the monocausal explanations of democratisation that have come to dominate, to a great extent, the debate on the matter. In this chapter I will also explain the apparently straightforward premise that, albeit not without its problems, Spain’s transition to democracy has simply been more successful than Mexico’s

The third chapter marks the beginning of the analysis of the case studies. First of all, the chapter opens with a brief comparison of the processes of regional integration in Europe and North America. This initial comparison is of the utmost importance since it will present a broad justification for the comparison, as well as identifying some of the key differences and similarities between both projects. This section will deal with the key differences, for the purpose of this thesis, between Europe’s multilateral approach to regional integration *vis a vis* NAFTA’s weak ‘dual-bilateralism’. The wider and deeper process of European integration, this chapter will argue, opened more opportunities to pro-democracy forces in Spain than the narrow and weakly institutionalised process of regional cooperation in North America offered to Mexico. The second part of the chapter builds on this idea of weak *vs.* strong institutionalisation to tackle two of the institutional transformations that were, to an extent, shaped by the

internationalisation projects of both cases. I argue that these transformations played an indirect part in shaping the democratic outcomes in both countries. Arend's Lijphart's celebrated work on democratic regimes (1999) has already analysed how the federalist/unitary dimension and the variations of political party systems (the 'executive-parties dimension') are characteristics that shape different democracies (majoritarian and consensus democracies) but that are by no means 'necessary' for democracy. These two dimensions may have an impact on the quality of democracy and/or shape of the regime (i.e. 'more or less' democratic) but not necessarily on the classification of the regime as democratic or non-democratic (i.e. 'either/or'). With this in mind, this thesis begins the analysis of the case studies by moving from the general to the particular. This is predominantly so for the Spanish case; there is already a vast amount of literature that deals with the process of Europeanisation – both in its 'maximalist' (understood as a structural change that takes a state to exhibit 'similar attributes to those that predominate in, or are closely identified with, Europe) and minimalist (understood as a 'response to the policies of the EU') senses (Featherstone, 2003: 3) – and how this has shaped Spain's democratic regime (Börzel, 2000 and 2002; Closa, 2001; Fishman, 2003; Guillén and Álvarez, 2004; Morata, 2007). Hence, this third chapter will analyse only two particular instances when internationalisation partially led to specific institutional adaptations in Spain (decentralisation and the political party system) and contrast these with the far more diffuse Mexican experience.

The fourth chapter basically 'defends' the thesis hypothesis from the perspective of modernisation theory. The chapter opens with a broad analysis of the modernisation approach to democratisation and the role socioeconomic features play in determining the structural contingencies that shape transitions to democracy. Hence, before moving into the analysis of the dynamic between internationalisation, socioeconomic development and democratisation in our two case studies, the first part of the chapter will briefly analyse other cases (mainly other Latin American countries) that elucidate better how this relationship works. The chapter will immediately move towards the analysis, from the perspective of a broader version of modernisation theory, of the role both processes of internationalisation played in the socioeconomic development of both countries, and thus in their respective processes of democratisation. A big part of this analysis obviously has to do with socioeconomic development in itself (after all the main premise of modernisation theory is that socioeconomic development makes democratisation an increasingly likely outcome), but it will also deal with the transformation of the economic model in both countries and how this may have affected its respective processes of democratisation.

The fifth chapter deals with one of the most significantly marked differences (for the purpose of this research project) between NAFTA and the EU as projects of internationalisation. This chapter deals with a level of the analysis that is explicitly related to democratic development:

the influence of NAFTA and the EU in the reconfiguration of the elites and the very important question of democratic conditionality. Matters of democratic conditionality are, in some ways, easier to identify since these are often included in official documents, accession treaties or declarations from officials. The broader role of internationalisation projects play in the reorganisation of elites may be, however, harder to identify. Yet it is still possible to do so. Following Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way's theory (2005 and 2010) on the impact of linkage and leverage on elite behaviour, this chapter will argue that as linkage between Europe and Spain, and the United States (and Canada to a lesser extent) and Mexico increased as a by product of a marked effort to change the ways both countries related to the international, important changes at elite level took place. Whether it was that a new elite (a more 'European' elite in the case of Spain or the 'educated-in-the-US technocrats' in Mexico) replaced the old authoritarian elite – as put forward by Holman (1995) – or it was the same elites simply becoming more sensitive to international pressure, the fact is that transformations at elite level played an important part in both transitions from authoritarianism. However, this chapter argues that the reluctance of the United States to attach any sort of democratic conditionality to NAFTA meant a missed opportunity by the United States to exert some leverage on the Mexican regime to democratise. This is obviously a marked contrast with the Spanish experience where it was understood – by both new and old elites – that full democratisation was a *sin qua non* for integration with Western Europe. I will therefore describe and analyse how Mexico's signing of NAFTA far from being hailed as a democratic triumph actually allowed for the (at least partial) strengthening of the regime.

The sixth chapter will, in a way, analyse the 'other side of the coin'. Whilst the fifth chapter analyses the effects of internationalisation on democratisation from 'above', the sixth chapter will analyse what effect, if any, the processes of internationalisation had on the creation of a broad social consensus in favour of democracy. In other words, this chapter asks if Spain joining the project of European integration or if Mexico's increasing linkage to North America influenced in any way their processes of democratisation from 'below'. Certainly it is difficult enough to analyse social and cultural changes by themselves, as well as any correlation between these and the process of democratisation. Adding an international dimension to this analysis complicates things even further. However, this chapter will focus on a number of very specific transformations at social level (e.g. the creation of a common 'identity' in the European case, the part international considerations can play in securing pro-democracy consensus at social level, as well as the role international actors may play in the creation of social capital) that were at least partly influenced by the increasing salience of the international context, and which clearly played a part in the democratisation of both countries.

The final chapter will, first and foremost, look to reinforce my main hypothesis by presenting a condensed summary of the main arguments. The idea is not to simply present a general recapitulation of the main points discussed, but to actually present my main conclusions in way that further emphasises how the specificities of NAFTA and the process of European integration were important elements that can help us explain the outcomes of the transitions to democracy in Spain and Mexico. Finally, the epilogue of this will present some reflections based on the idea that when transitions to democracy overlap with projects of internationalisation, the international context matters even more, and briefly discussed how this idea fits within the context of current developments; can the Spanish and Mexican examples help us explain the international dimension of democratisation elsewhere?

CHAPTER II. Framing the Debate: Because Theory Matters

Is democracy truly the preferred form of government for most people around the world? Francis Fukuyama – although no stranger to controversy – is not afraid to support this notion outright and claim that ‘most people around the world would strongly prefer to live in a society in which their government was accountable and effective’ (2011:11). Undoubtedly there are many problems with this generalisation and there are probably better ways to make this point¹. Although true that the last two decades of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first spelled an unprecedented increase in the number of democratic regimes, less than half the world’s population lives under some form of democratic rule and only 11 per cent reside in full democracies; as recently as 2011, ‘some 2.6 billion people, more than one-third of the world’s population, still lived under authoritarian rule (with a large share being, of course, in China)’ (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2011: 2-3). What is more, even the unpredicted ‘Arab Spring’ cannot make up for the clear ‘stagnation’ in democratic advancements. Evidence suggests that the quality of democracy has been dropping in Western Europe and Latin America:

In recent years, the post-1970s wave of democratisation has slowed or been reversed. In some respects the trend was made worse by the post-2008 economic crisis. There has been a decline in some aspects of governance, political participation and media freedoms, and a clear deterioration in attitudes associated with, or that are conducive to, democracy in many countries. Many governments have felt increasingly vulnerable and threatened and have reacted by intensifying their efforts to control the media and impede free expression (*ibid*: 17).

If, then, as Fukuyama suggests and logic would probably dictate, most people would prefer to live under an ‘accountable and effective’ government (i.e. a democratic one, since only democratic governments are accountable through the ballots and are, by definition, far more susceptible to citizens’ demands than any authoritarian regime ever could), why is it that democracy is still far from being the only form of government around the world? The answer to this question has been troubling political scientists for the last fifty years and, in fact, it has probably been the discipline’s most researched question for the last quarter of a century (Boix and Stokes, 2007: 9). At the same time, there are many levels to this question and there are no easy answers. Before even dealing with the issue of causality there is the question of defining democracy. Trying to explain why and how a particular process takes place becomes an even

¹ Nancy Bermeo (2009: 245-249) develops a far more comprehensive argument regarding the ‘triumph’ of democracy. Bermeo draws on a number of cross-regional surveys to prove the point that democracy has more cross-regional appeal than any other form of government; she furthers reaffirms her argument by claiming that almost all regional integration projects or International Organisations have some sort of democratic clause, and that even non-democratic elites feel compelled to ‘pay lip service to democracy’s merits’ (248).

harder proposition if there is no clear consensus regarding what the end product (i.e. democracy) of that process should be. In reality, there are probably as many definitions of democracy as scholars willing to write about it. In a similar vein, political science – in particular comparative politics – has tried to analyse the process of democratisation from a variety of perspectives; any number of variables ranging from institutional arrangements to cultural/religious traits have been proposed as the underlying causes of the failure of some countries to establish democracy. This chapter, though, initially deals with the apparently simple question: what is democracy?

This chapter will deal with the essential task of defining key concepts, in particular the concept of democracy and, by inference, that of democratisation. Here I will develop a concept of democracy that will help with the construction of my hypothesis on democratisation. In a similar vein, I will develop a definition of internationalisation based on the narrower literature – if compared with the amount available on democratisation – dealing with this issue. In order to develop satisfactory definitions of these key concepts, however, a thorough review of the literature will be presented, which will also help place this thesis within a theoretical framework. This chapter will also describe how, with some exceptions, transitions to democracy are often analysed under specific theoretical constraints. As I have said before, studies of the Spanish transition to democracy, for instance, have, more often than not, presented theories of a ‘top-down’ nature and/or focused on ‘elites’ as the main unit of analysis (Balfour and Quiroga, 2007: 19; Colomer, 1991 and 1995; Field and Hamann, 2008; Gunther, 1992; Holman, 1995; Hopkin, 2005; Linz and Stepan, 1996; Poulantzas, 1976); interpretations of the Mexican democratisation process, on the other hand, have not been as ‘narrow’ as the literature on the Spanish case but there is still a certain tendency to interpret Mexico’s transition as a process carried out at an institutional level (mainly political parties) and one that was started from ‘within’ the institutional arrangements of authoritarianism (Acosta, 2010; Aguayo Quezada, 2010a: 25; Crespo, 2007; Dresser, 2005: 363; Durand Ponte, 2004; Magaloni, 2005; Merino, 2003; Ortega Ortiz, 2001 and 2008; Prud’Homme, 1994). With this in mind, this chapter will present a comprehensive literature review and develop the theoretical framework that will be used during the comparison of the case studies.

2.1 Defining democracy

The emergence of centralised modern nation-states with clear geographic boundaries created the possibility of international relations and comparative politics as independent disciplines. Similarly, and much more relevant to this thesis, with the appearance of a new state-apparatus capable of monopolising the use of force and establishing a rationalised-legal administration, came a need to find new ways to legitimise these governments (this a basic Weberian definition

of the state). In essence, the modern state 'transformed personalistic rule and ad hoc justification of authority to depersonalised, public governance based on the rule of law' (Spruyt, 2007: 212). The change in the justification of authority basically implied a change in the way the use of power by the state was being rationalised. In a nutshell, once divine right stopped being a viable way to legitimise the monopolisation of power, several new ways to do so arose. It was then that democratic rule emerged as one of those new ways of gaining legitimacy.

The common conception that democracy was born in Athens, although true to some extent, can be misleading. Fifth-century Athens' form of democracy was at the very best an 'amateur' version of modern democracy (Hague and Harrop, 2007: 45) – it was in essence a form of direct democracy that was already hard enough to implement as the small city-states began to grow and thus would be almost impossible to conceive in any modern state (Fukuyama, 2011:20). Other descriptions, however, that get closer to explaining the key difference between Athenian republicanism (i.e. democracy) *vis a vis* modern democracy would probably be those of 'tribal democracy' (Tocqueville, 1835 [2006]) or 'classical republicanism' (Fukuyama, 2011: 20). The key element that differentiates the Athenian republicanism from the new republican theory – ushered by the founding of the United States – which explains the progression from tribal (or amateur) to modern conceptualisations of democracy, is the understanding of the citizenry's liberty. In classical republicanism the citizens (as limited as the citizenry was) were free because they pursued direct participation in politics, whilst in the theory of 'new republicanism' liberty means the freedom to accumulate private property without inference (Pangle, 2009: 21-22). In any case, it would be easy to think that, since democracy has, one way or another, been a constant feature of political development since before the emergence of the modern state a consensus would have already been reached on its basic characteristics. Yet, agreeing on the characteristics that constitute a modern democratic regime (i.e. one that fits the notion of the modern nation-state) has been an issue troubling political scientists for as long as politics has strived to be a science. It was not until the 1950s and 1960s that, with the rise to prominence of social scientists such as Robert Dahl, Seymour M. Lipset and Joseph M. Schumpeter, serious attention was paid to the theoretical implications of democracy. Regardless of the theory that dominated academic circles at a specific period, the study of democracy has very much been at the fore of political science ever since.

As one of the earlier modern theorists of democracy, Schumpeter proposed 'another type of democracy' that was a response to what he perceived as the eighteenth-century 'classical doctrine of democracy'. He famously defined this 'new' democratic method as 'that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of competitive struggle for the people's vote' (Schumpeter, 1942 [2011]: 269). In his definition, Schumpeter decides to leave aside conflicting concepts such as

‘the Common Good’ and the coterminous ‘Common Will’, in favour of a definition that favours electoral competition for different groups with different interests, and that acknowledges the role of leadership instead of attributing to the electorate an ‘altogether degree of initiative which practically amount[s] to ignoring leadership’ (*ibid*: 270). This notion of democracy is commonly referred to as minimalist or Schumpeterian.

There are, of course, other characteristics that democracies should share and I shall deal with this question soon. For now though, it has to be kept in mind that despite a natural tendency to abandon dichotomies, there is still a basic need for typologies in political science. In fact, the process of classification should be completed before comparison can even take place; whilst classification is a matter of ‘either/or’, comparison is a matter of ‘more or less’ within the typologies already established (Kalleberg, 1966: 81). For democratic studies there has to be a clear ‘either/or’ dichotomy between democratic and non-democratic before we can attach qualifiers and talk about ‘more or less’ democratic (i.e. the quality of democracy). In order to achieve this basic distinction, Norberto Bobbio puts forward the argument that the only way one can distinguish democracy from any other form of autocratic government is by analysing the rules that establish who is authorised to take collective decisions and under which procedures these decisions are taken (1984 [2001]: 24). This minimalist approach to the distinction of democracy *vis-a-vis* everything else – most likely influenced by Schumpeter’s work – is then complemented by Bobbio’s three basic conditions governments must comply with in order to be considered democratic. The first condition is that decisions taken by some members of the group have to be accepted as collective decisions – the only way for this to be possible is if there are clear rules that establish who are the individuals responsible for taking the decisions and how they reach these decisions; the second condition is that those called to participate in the collective decision making process – this includes the actual decision making or the selection process of the individuals in charge of making the decisions – represent a ‘very high number’ of the members of the group; and his third condition is that those who make decisions and those who are called to select those who take decisions, must have real alternatives and must be able to choose between one or the other (*ibid*: 24-26). This notion of democracy is very close to Schumpeter’s with the significant distinction that Bobbio refers to a legal framework that legitimises the selection of leaders and the decision making process. Bobbio goes beyond the mere ‘struggle for the people’s vote’ by adding a basic legal dimension.

The final pieces of the puzzle are found in Giovanni Sartori’s four basic elements he claims a regime should adhere to in order to be considered a liberal democracy. These elements are not merely a complement to the minimalist definitions offered by Schumpeter and Bobbio but rather encapsulate what they propose whilst adding the ‘liberal’ aspect to democracy. It is this liberal aspect (i.e. the legal safeguarding of minorities) that makes modern democracies unique.

This 'liberal dimension' to democracy does not necessarily refer to the incorporation of minorities (or the 'maximisation of the size of the majorities') into the decision-making process as the consensual model of democracy would suggest (Lijphart, 1999: 2), but rather to the safeguarding of their rights even when they are not part of government. In any case, these four elements are: 1) The freeing of people (the liberal element), 2) the empowering of people (the democratic element), 3) what he refers to as 'demo-protection' or the protection of people from tyranny, and 4) 'demo-power' or the implementation of popular rule (Sartori, 1995). I believe these basic four conditions combined with a minimalist definition of democracy should give us enough elements to understand what institutional democracy is, as well as the very basic tasks it should accomplish (i.e. freeing people, empowering people and defending them from tyranny).

Although I believe that the conditions mentioned above are enough to distinguish democracies from non-democracies, there are those who disagree. The minimalist/Schumpeterian notion of democracy – which has influenced the views on democracy of a whole generation of scholars that include Bobbio, Dahl, Di Palma, Elster and Linz – has been heavily criticised. Wolfgang Merkel, for example, refers to it as an 'abstract system of rules' (1998: 33-34) that is unrepresentative of the complexities of democracy. Although this is a valid concern, it is my view that, for purely methodological reasons, such definitions still provide a good framework for the study of democratisation. Certainly Merkel's concerns with a 'watered-down' interpretation of democracy are justified and, in fact, echoed by other transition scholars. Guillermo O'Donnell, for instance, is not only concerned with the wisdom of providing a somewhat simplistic definition of democracy but he is also concerned with the resulting difficulties of providing an appropriate theoretical framework that can accurately help us explain the paradoxical situation of new post-authoritarian democracies. In his view, 'the joyful celebration of the advent of democracy' that followed the sudden collapse of the USSR and marked 'the end of history' should have been 'complemented with the sober recognition of the immense (and, indeed, historically unusual) difficulties' of institutionalising and consolidating democracy at a societal level (O'Donnell, 1993: 1367). The ensuing logical step of 'attaching qualifiers to democracy' to define the emerging post-authoritarian regimes was, in O'Donnell's view (2001: 2), simply inaccurate as it implies that the term democracy 'is taken to have a clear and consistent meaning, which then is partially modified by the qualifiers, something that is not the case'. Despite all these valid anxieties surrounding the use of a procedural definition of democracy – and regardless if it is complemented by the qualifiers O'Donnell condemns – it is clear to me that following a minimalist approach helps transitological researchers develop hypotheses of democratisation without getting entangled with the almost impossible task of defining democracy. Dahl's criteria for a democratic process, for example, allows us to qualify regimes on a democratic scale by looking at five simple indicators: effective participation, voting equality, enlightened understanding, control of the agenda and inclusion of adults (Dahl,

1998: 37-38). Such straightforward conceptualisations may not be enough to describe the many intricacies of democracy but they do provide a valid framework to rely on when developing democratisation hypotheses.

In fact, it has been argued that contemporary applications of Schumpeterian democracy 'heavily overlap with Dahl's polyarchy by also implying the civil and political freedoms necessary for political debate and electoral campaigning' (Diamond, 2002: 21-22); this means that even minimalist definitions of democracy (such as Schumpeter's) encompass more than the simple exercise of placing responsibility for the decision making – thus avoiding the fallacy of 'electoralism' as warned by Schmitter and Karl (1991: 78). Without ignoring the concerns of Merkel and O'Donnell, one could, in a narrow sense then, single out the basic institutional arrangements necessary for a democratic regime to thrive and which, even if contested, are accepted by most. Although regimes with democratic institutional characteristics that are not completely democratic can and have existed (single-party or dominant-party regimes in Mexico or Poland in the 1970s and 1980s for example), an example of a democratic regime without democratic institutions (i.e. an electoral organisation, an independent judiciary, a competitive and fair party system, etc.) is, for obvious reasons, impossible to find. Therefore, for the purpose of this thesis the procedural definition of democracy will be understood as a system of government that allows for competition of votes where true choice and freedom to choose exists, where a high number of the citizens are able to participate, where there are rules that dictate how decisions are taken (and who takes them) and where legal frameworks guarantee the safeguard of individual and minorities' liberties. This definition involves a more detailed explanation of what democracy, at a very basic level, and what it is supposed to achieve without necessarily falling into oversimplifications of the concept (such as 'democracy is a system in which parties lose elections' (Przeworski, 1991: 10)).

There is, of course, an argument to be made against the use of an 'empirical' understanding of democracy. After all, democracy is not only a procedural arrangement (as aptly explained by Schumpeter and Dahl) but can also be understood as an ideology or a theory (Grugel, 2002: 12). In fact, before the behavioural revolution of the 1950s, democracy was probably better understood as a 'normative' term, which was explained as an ideology by political philosophy (*ibid*: 12-18). It was this understanding of democracy as an ideology that motivated Schumpeter to distinguish between the 'classical conception of democracy' from his 'new democracy', and Dahl's distinction between democracy and polyarchy. As mentioned before, this new empirical/procedural definition of democracy focuses on explaining the process or method by which leaders are selected and how decisions are taken. However, this straightforward explanation of democracy as an empirical construct has come under fierce criticism. First of all, authors such as Bob Jessop, Charles Lindblom and Steven Lukes have vehemently criticised the

idea that democracy can be simply reduced to an institutionalised competition for 'the people's vote'. Despite some differences in how they perceive power, they all seem to agree that pluralism in its classical sense (i.e. competition amongst different factions that have access to the same resources) is unrepresentative of capitalist societies (*ibid*: 20-21). As such, defining democracy as merely the institutions that regulate competition is ignoring the structural, cultural and normative dimensions of democracy.

At the same time, the idea of democracy as a 'universal value' – as famously described by Amartya Sen (1999) – has considerably strengthened in the last three decades. In essence, the end of the Cold War can be interpreted as the success of democracy as an idea rather than just a procedure (Bermeo, 2009: 243-245). By the early 2000s, for instance, most developmental aid organisations in the world had already embraced the promotion of 'democratic governance' as one of their key goals (Carothers and Gramont, 2013: 90-91). This adoption of specific political goals (i.e. the promotion of democracy/democratic governance) is due to instrumental reasons (as the consequences of democracy literature would suggest (Carbone, 2009), democracy supposedly helps solve problems such as inequality, slow economic growth, human capital and lack of socioeconomic development in general), but it is also because of intrinsic reasons (Carothers and Gramont, 2013: 10); there seems to be a belief that the values of democracy are 'goods in their own right and should be promoted as separate objectives or as part of a unified political-economic conception of development' (*ibid*). This recent development is evidence that a procedural understanding of democracy may no longer be the same as an 'empirical' understanding of democracy. For all intents and purposes then, democracy – in the 'real world' – exists as more than a mere 'institutional arrangement'. It could be said that the conceptualisation of democracy has come full circle since Schumpeter 'stripped' democracy of its normative elements in order to develop a more empirical definition. Today, it could be argued that the ideological dimension of democracy is as relevant to its empirical understanding as is its description of institutional arrangements.

With this in mind, it becomes increasingly important to analyse the 'cultural' dimension to democracy. Despite the fact that 'with the exception of Hobbes, the relationship between civic culture and political regime has been one of the central perceptions of all modern political theorists' (Boix and Stokes, 2007: 10), the proposition that there are certain values and attitudes that fit democratic regimes is sternly contested. In *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville refers to a certain virtue in societies that successfully establish democratic regimes,

'Although a democratic government is founded upon a very simple and natural principle, it always presupposes the existence of a high degree of culture and enlightenment. At the first glance it may be imagined to belong to the earliest stages of the world, but a maturer observation

will convince us that it could only come last in the succession of human history' (Tocqueville, 1835 [2006]).

Tocqueville is referring to democracy as a form of government (or a regime) and not as the 'tribal' form of organisation described before when referring to ancient Greece. A century and a half later Huntington picked up where Tocqueville left off and explored the idea that democratic leaders cannot 'through will and skill create democracy where pre-conditions are absent' (Huntington, 1991:108). He goes on to explain that the Third Wave of democratisation was only possible because several factors made it a possibility in much of the developing world. This included socioeconomic development and responsible elites, of course, but also cultural (mainly religious) and international changes. In his view 'a strong correlation exists between Western Christianity and democracy'; his controversial claim that it seemed 'plausible to hypothesise that the expansion of Christianity encourages democratic development' (*ibid*: 72), gained him as many critics as supporters². Religious beliefs as such are not part of the orientations that define political culture³, but they do have a major impact on the way people in a given society interact with authority figures and amongst themselves. Therefore, we can expect that a change in religious attitudes could have a major effect on the orientations that do define political culture.

Influenced by Talcott Parsons' work (1951[1991]) in the field of sociology, scholars such as Seymour Martin Lipset, Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba proposed a culturalist response to the procedural conceptualisations of democracy and developed qualifying scales for democracies based on more than institutional qualifiers. It has been, however, Ronald Inglehart (although himself a modernisation theorist) who has been at the forefront of the more recent culturalist attempts to 'measure' democracy. By assigning quantitative values to societal attitudes and beliefs, Inglehart has attempted to construct a clear distinction between formal and genuine democracies. Inglehart and Welzel, for instance, define democracy as a result of deep-rooted orientations that motivate the members of a society 'to demand freedom and responsive government – and to act to ensure that the governing elites remain responsive to them' (2005: 2). From this perspective democracy is a phenomenon that depends on individual values that are then projected towards the political system. Their distinction between formal (when the institutions and the mass values are not congruent) and genuine democracy (when institutions

² The successful democratisation of Southern Europe, Latin America and Poland put an end to the idea that democracy was an inherently protestant phenomenon. However, the view that religious characteristics can shape elements of democratic regimes is still defended in some quarters; Lipset and Lenz have argued that, to some degree of statistical certainty, Protestantism has, for instance, a negative correlation with levels of corruption (Lipset and Lenz, 2000: 20-22).

³ As defined by Almond and Verba, the political culture of a nation is the 'particular distribution of patterns of orientation toward political objects' (1989: 13); since religion is not inherently part of the political spectrum – regardless of how secular or religious a state may be – it cannot be an element of political culture as such. Regardless, there is no doubt that religious beliefs can play a big part in how an individual regards its political system (both cognitively and affectively) and him/herself in that system.

and mass values are in alignment), which is key to understanding the importance mass values and social attitudes have in democratisation processes (sixth chapter), rests on the claim that 'formal democracy can be imposed on almost any society, but whether it provides genuine autonomous choice to its citizens largely depends on mass values' (*ibid*: 149).

The view that many of the problems of democracy or government in general are a result of a difference between societal and institutional evolutions is by no means new though. As early as 1968 Samuel Huntington put forward his theory that the distinction in the type of government is not as relevant as the distinction in the degree of government. Although he acknowledged that, in general terms, authoritarianism does not mean a lower degree of government, he explains that political instability in the developing world (which at the time the book was written included most of Latin America, Africa and Asia) is precisely a consequence of political institutions not evolving quickly enough to fit with the many societal changes usually related with modernisation;

'Social and economic change – urbanisation, increases in literacy and education, industrialisation, mass media expansion – extend political consciousness, multiply political demands, broaden political participation. These changes undermine traditional political institutions; they enormously complicate the problem of creating new bases of political association and new political institutions combining legitimacy and effectiveness. The rates of social mobilisation and expansion of political participation are high; the rates of political organisation and institutionalisation are low. The result is political instability and disorder. The primary problem of politics is the lag in development of political institutions behind social and economic change' (Huntington, 1968 [2006]: 5).

This basic idea of a mismatch between institutions and societal 'values' has remained at the forefront of the debate on democratisation. Diamond observed, at the beginning of last decade, that although more and more regimes may be adopting the 'form' of an electoral democracy, the vast majority of them would fail to pass the 'substantive test' (Diamond, 2002: 22). It goes without saying that 'formal democracies' will always tend to be unstable unless they find another way of legitimising power other than the popular vote (e.g. economic performance, ideology, law and order). In any case, it would be safe to assume that there are not many formal democracies that would pass this 'substantive test' or many genuine democracies that only adopt a 'form' of electoral democracy. At a first glance it would appear that Inglehart and Welzel – and Diamond to a lesser extent – fall into the contradictions Schumpeter warns us of, i.e. attributing to the electorate an 'altogether degree of initiative which practically amount[s] to ignoring leadership'. The reliance on the individual in Inglehart and Welzel's definition does not, however, exclude the importance of institutional arrangements that Schumpeter emphasises, it simply introduces a cultural variable to the equation. In my view, both theories

refer to different aspects of the same process, or two sides of the same coin (the institutional and the mass values variables). Hence, throughout this thesis whenever there is a reference to democracy I will be referring to the procedural arrangement I described earlier (its institutional arrangements) complemented, particularly with the sixth chapter in mind, by the mass values variable as identified in Inglehart and Welzel's genuine democracy concept.

Finally, one last consideration that needs to be acknowledge when defining democracy is the increasing tendency to separate democracy – defined as a set of institutions that determine who governs, or the input dimension – and good governance – understood as the ‘the exercise of political and administrative authority at all levels to manage a country's affairs’ (UNDP, 2012: 3), or the output. In essence, a growing academic literature distinguishes the process of establishing democratic institutions (democratisation) from the process of developing ‘good governance’ or ‘quality of government’. In this new vision, democracy in the form of ‘political equality on the input side must be complemented with impartiality on the output side of the political system, that is, in the exercise of public authority’ (Rothstein and Teorell, 2008: 170). This new tendency, spearheaded by international aid organisation like the World Bank and the UNDP, emphasises the promotion of ‘desirable features’ such as ‘participation, accountability, inclusion and transparency’ in the formation of ‘democratic governance’ (Carothers and de Gramont, 2013: 90-91). The main argument of the proponents of the good governance literature is that ‘well-functioning democracies tend to embody the core desirable governance characteristics’, or in other words, ‘democracies that do not exhibit good governance [...] are not doing well as democracies’ (*ibid*: 91). It could be argued, therefore, that the differences between our two case studies, for instance, may be down to their quality of government (i.e. democratic governance) rather than to the levels of success of their respective transitions to democracy. It is not that Spain is more ‘democratic’ but simply that it has a better quality of government.

Although I do not entirely disagree with this general assessment, the distinction between good governance and democracy, for the purpose of this thesis is not entirely relevant. Definitions of good governance tend to be rather broad and fail to distinguish, for example, whether the quality of government is better or worse due to issues with the content of policies (i.e. bad policies) or the procedures (the implementation of policies) (Rothstein and Teorell, 2008: 168). In any case, the distinction between democracy as the input, and good governance as the output is what is more relevant for this thesis. The idea that what defines a democracy is the equality in the access to power, and than the impartiality in the execution/application of policies is what defines good governance (*ibid*: 170) is certainly relevant. However, for the purpose of clarity and simplicity, when referring to democracy in this thesis I will be referring to both issues of input and output. After all – as the literature in political culture, institutionalism (see next

chapter) and the policy process (Lindblom, 1959) argues – the input and the output dimensions of the political system are not independent from each other; there is a clear reinforcing element. Even a quick glance at the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators shows a clear correlation between good/high governance and democracy. What is more, even if Spain seems to be one of those 'full democracies' (as defined by Polity IV) or 'Free countries' (as defined by Freedom House) that exhibit quite poor governance levels in some of the indicators analysed by the World Bank (Carothers and Gramont, 2013: 91) – particularly the 'Political Stability and Absence of Terrorism' indicator – the fact remains that Spain's record is still considerably better than Mexico's (see table 2.1). For these reasons, then, when referring to democracy in this thesis I will be referring to both the input and the output without necessarily making a distinction between the two.

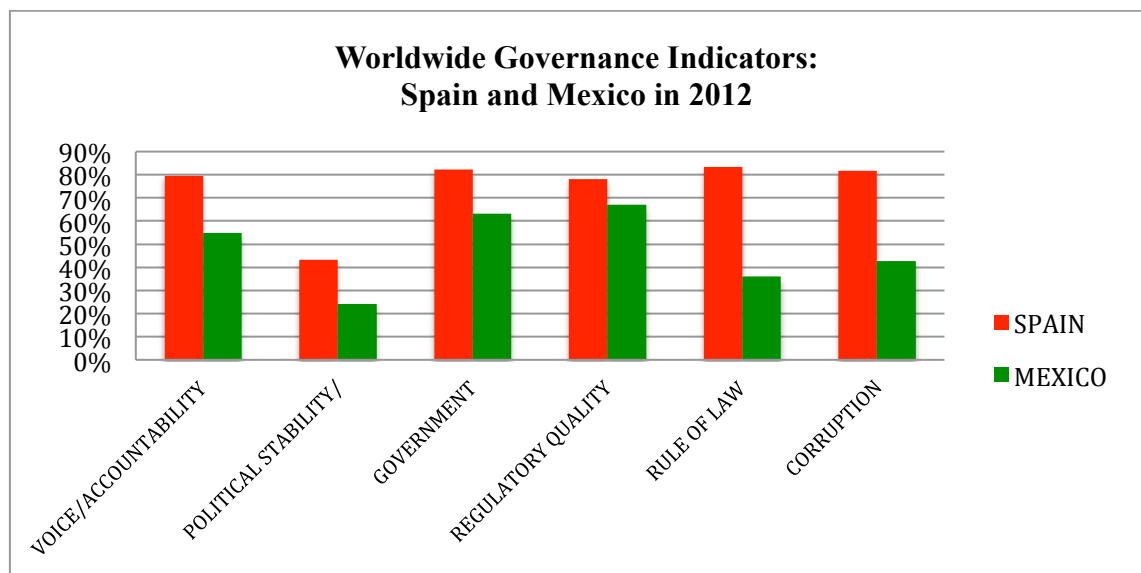


FIGURE 2.1. *Worldwide Governance Indicators 2012*, The World Bank Group. Percentile relative to worldwide countries in the six 'governance indicators' measured by The World Bank.

It probably goes without saying that when referring to democratisation or transition to democracy during this thesis, I will be referring to the process by which a specific political system becomes more akin to the definition of democracy presented above. Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter's (1986: 7) definition of democratisation, which is based on the concept of citizenship (i.e. the '*right* to be treated by fellow human beings as equal with respect to the making of collective choices and the *obligation* of those implementing those choices to be equally accountable and accessible to all members of the polity'), accurately describes the transformations that are inherent in this process of democratisation. For them democratisation

'refers to the process whereby the rules and procedures of citizenship are either applied to political institutions previously governed by other principles [...], or expanded to include

persons not previously enjoying such rights and obligations [...], or extended to cover issues and institutions nor previously subject to citizen participation' (*ibid*: 8).

Unlike their definition, my description of democracy is not explicitly linked to the concept of the citizen, yet their description of the process does elucidate the areas that democratisation should transform. In other words, democracy not only advances by democratising institutions but also by expanding the number of people involved in its exercise, and by transforming rules and procedures. Since democracy here is understood both as an institutional arrangement and as the social construct that supports this arrangement, democratisation occurs not only when institutions are transformed but also when individuals change their views and attitudes. Whether mass values and attitudes are projected towards the political system – as claimed by Inglehart and Welzel – or if these are consequences of an institutional arrangement is, for now, irrelevant. What is important to note at this point is that successful democratisation entails a redefinition of institutions as well as the emergence of certain attitudinal changes that support it.

2.2 Defining internationalisation in relation to democratisation

There is no doubt that, although not as problematic as defining democracy, developing an accurate definition of internationalisation also poses some difficulties. First of all, it is important to make the distinction between globalisation and internationalisation. Although, especially in mere economic terms, globalisation and internationalisation are often used as interchangeable terms (e.g. Sweet, 1999: 4), for the purpose of this thesis it is necessary to delineate some key differences. Whilst the term 'globalisation' – which I use here with due caution – has usually been used to describe the process of increasing integration of the globe⁴, internationalisation as a concept, albeit closely related to globalisation, refers to the increasing relevance of the international in domestic processes. In many ways, we could say that the increasing internationalisation of domestic politics is a result of globalisation rather than a synonym. This is a particularly acute symptom of globalisation in what can be considered the less powerful

⁴ Although a detailed discussion on the validity of the concept and the intricacies of the phenomenon is outside the scope of this thesis, it must be noted that there are different views on what globalisation is and what it entails. On the one hand, for example, Thomas Friedman's well-known work 'The World is Flat' (2005) argues that we are now entering an era of 'Globalisation 3.0' in which personal computers and the Internet make the exchange of information free and simple. His basic argument is that national borders and other barriers to international trade, offshoring and generally doing business globally are disappearing under the weight of globalisation. An alternative view, however, sees economic integration not as a single process of globalisation in which the world as whole is becoming 'flat', but rather as a process with 'mountains and deep valleys – restrictions and impediments – that impede globalisation and encourage investments in near regions' (Pastor, 2011: 98); in other words 'globalisation as popularly understood does not exist' since multinational corporations in the United States, Europe and Asia tend to 'both produce and sell on a home region bases' (Rugman and Oh, 2008: 13). This view of globalisation, i.e. as a combination of regionalisations (Pastor, 2001: 19-39 and 2004) rather than a single process of global integration, relates better to this thesis understanding of internationalisation. This is because internationalisation – much like regionalisation but not necessarily globalisation – implies a conscious effort by national governments in order to be successful.

'semi-peripheral' (or middle-income) countries. As globalisation advances, we see a transfer of control 'over the movements of people capital and information' away from many semi-peripheral countries' domestic governments, and into the hands of international organisations, regional and political economic blocs, transnational companies and world-wide communication and entertainment networks (Yilmaz, 2002: 82). Concurrently to this process, we can observe an increasing tendency from internationally based actors to become 'a part of the domestic system' and, thus, become regulated by the 'institutional relationships which are built around them' (Chalmers, 1993). Therefore, international actors based in a third country can gain relevance as they become incorporated, as full actors, into the domestic system. For example, if we were to consider the consolidation of democracy in Latin America we would have to pay attention not only to whether or not 'the US government's policy has been to promote democracy, and if it has the will and resources to carry out the policy, but also whether the way in which [the US] behaves and is linked with other actors is democratic, and encourages democratic behaviour' (*ibid*). We could thus argue that the combination of these two processes, the loss of control by domestic governments and the increasing integration of international actors into domestic systems, has led to an 'internationalisation of domestic politics' in some countries (Yilmaz, 2002: 83). This thesis understands projects of internationalisation as the attempts by national governments to deal with this phenomenon and/or their attempt to gain an advantage from this phenomenon; they do this by institutionalising this process through membership into International Organisations (IOs), regional blocs or supranational organisations.

A slightly different way of looking at internationalisation would be to look at its economic and political dimensions as parallel yet different processes. In economic terms, internationalisation is generally understood as the 'successful constitution of transnational markets' facilitated by a wide range of 'economic and technological interdependencies' (Knill and Lehmkuhl, 2002: 41-42), or simply put it is the 'integration into the international economy' (Garrett and Lang, 1995: 627). Since this thesis is not dealing with the specificities of economic integration but rather with the political repercussions of specific projects of internationalisation, there is no need to go into further detail to define economic internationalisation. What is important to understand, though, is that the 'integration into the international economy' will have an impact 'on the preferences and coalitional behaviour of domestic actors' and institutions (*ibid*: 628). At the same time, more often than not this 'successful constitution of transnational markets coincides with the inability of governments to address social and political problems that are emerging from economic integration, both at the national and the international level' (Knill and Lehmkuhl, 2002: 42). In other words, there is a clear discrepancy between the advancement of economic and political internationalisation.

We can see this discrepancy in specific examples. For instance, globalisation explains, to an

extent, the increasing flow of people, goods and capital between the Mexican/American borders. This phenomenon, though, creates certain 'problems' that need solving. One of them is the issue of trade (i.e. the efficiency, safety and speed with which products move between borders), which was partly solved by NAFTA. But other problems, such as drug trafficking and undocumented migration, remain unsolved. An international or transnational agreement, treaty or organisation that would seek to solve these issues would be an example of political internationalisation, or a political reaction to economic internationalisation; it would be a conscious attempt to solve a political problem via transnational solutions. This would entail a recognition that these problems 'do not comfortably fit into the compartments of "domestic" or "foreign" policy. They share both components' (Pastor, 2011: 15). When governments accept that many of the problems affecting their countries cannot be solved domestically, since there are transnational dimensions to the supply and demand chain, political internationalisation may occur. Obviously this political internationalisation rarely evolves at the same pace of economic internationalisation. This is obviously down to the fact that designing, agreeing on and implementing political structures (or even coordinated policies) at a speed that can keep up with the dynamics of economic integration is almost impossible to achieve (as the recent crisis in the EU can probably attest); this does not mean, though, that governments are not trying. Either as a response to increasing economic internationalisation or as conscious attempt to solve other political issues⁵, political internationalisation has been advancing at a steady pace for the last six decades. For the purposes of this thesis, then, a definition of internationalisation has to originate from an understanding of the process as the political attempts to 'catch up' with economic internationalisation. This is not to say that economic developments in the area are to be ignored but this is primarily a thesis dealing with political transformations.

Having established that internationalisation will be understood mainly as a political development, there is a need to briefly explore the relationship between this process and that of democratisation. In essence, it could be said that there are two broad ways this analysis can be done. If one is to understand internationalisation (both political and economic) as a process that threatens the legitimacy of liberal democracies by subtracting effective power from traditional political institutions (i.e. citizens' votes no longer confer effective power to national governments), then one is left with a problem of 'global democracy' (Held, 1995 and 1997; Saward, 2008). But if one is to analyse internationalisation as a process affecting democracy as a national/institutional arrangement (i.e. taking the state as the unit of analysis despite its transformation spawned from internationalisation processes) (Görg and Hirsch, 1998: 587-599)

⁵ The EU is the clearest – and probably only – example of economic internationalisation being used as a tool for political integration. The argument being that political integration was the only way Europe could resolve the great problem of the post World War II era: how to reconcile the idea of a strong German economy, needed for the prosperity of the wider western European economy, with the rearmament of the country. The solution, reluctantly accepted by France at first, was to secure the integration of Germany into a supranational structure (Stirk, 1996: 119).

instead of as the principle by which individuals confer legitimacy to a specific government, then one is left with a problem of interaction between the domestic and the international. In other words, we can see globalisation and internationalisation as a challenge to the concept of democracy or to its execution.

A procedural approach to internationalisation would see this process as a challenge to democracy's execution rather than its conceptualisation and it would have to be, by force of logical inference, a state-centred approach. Such a definition of internationalisation fits the objective of this thesis better than a definition that leads us to discuss issues of 'global democracy'. What is more, a minimalist definition that sees internationalisation as a process whereby the political regime simply becomes a more international object (Goldmann, 2001: 8) is a better fit – particularly in its procedural sense – for a state-centred definition of democracy (such as the one I discussed before). Hence, when talking about internationalisation I am referring to a state-centred process (e.g. the internationalisation of the economy, media, society, higher education and decision making of a country). As such, the internationalisation of the political (as has been said, democracy remains a political phenomenon) combines three dynamics: the internationalisation of problems on political agendas (e.g. climate change, terrorism and drug trade), the internationalisation of societies for which politics are made (migration, cultural homogenisation and media) and the internationalisation of the making of political decisions (e.g. International Organisations and International Summits) (*ibid*: 9). Therefore, when referring to internationalisation I am obviously referring to the impact of two organisation/institutions (EEC/EU and NAFTA) on democratic transitions, but also about the wider initiatives by European actors (be it European institutions or individual member states) and the United States. After all, domestic structures in Spain and Mexico were influenced directly by the 'institutional' pressures inherent in adaptation to membership into a new regional organisation, as well as by the policies, strategies and initiatives implemented by different international actors.

In short then, as discussed in the first chapter, Spain and Mexico (and NAFTA and European integration) were chosen mainly because when trying to compare the effects of internationalisation projects on democratisation processes we have very limited options. Not every country that democratises and embraces liberal economic reform is necessarily embarking on a specific process of internationalisation. This is because globalisation is not necessarily a uniform process leading to a 'flat world' (Friedman, 2005) but rather a process that, by increasing the vulnerability of individual countries 'to the performance of the world economy' (Kim and Shin, 2002: 450), leads to increasing regional integrations. The redefinition of domestic policies that certain forms of regionalisation entails is, thus, what is understood here as internationalisation.

2.3. Democratisation theories

The scholarly study of democratisation is characterised by countless approaches, explanatory theories, typologies and categorisations. In general terms however, a distinction can be made between the major theories depending on whether they try to explain *how* democracy happens or *why* it happens. Theories that explain how democracy happens tend to focus on 'proximate causes rather than long-term causes. In a strict sense, this situation-oriented approach does not explain democratisation. It describes it, even if the description is highly formalised' (Haerpfer *et al.*, 2009: 4). Theories that explain why democracy happens often focus on 'conditions that predate democratisation processes. The aim is to identify the factors that make it likely for democratisation to start and to succeed, rather than on focusing on what takes place during the process of democratisation itself' (*ibid*). The distinction between these two approaches though is not always clear. Even theories that supposedly focus on approximate causes, like elite theory for example, do try to establish causal correlations that explain democratisation (e.g. the more unified elites are, the likelier democratisation is to succeed). In any case, newer theories of democratisation do not focus exclusively on one or the other; no longer is it enough to say why democracy happens without explaining how it happens. 'Insights from both approaches must be integrated to attain a full understanding of democratisation processes' (*ibid*).

2.3.1 Classic approaches to democratisation

This holistic approach to democratisation has not always been a priority for democratisation scholars. We could say that, very broadly speaking, the key question of causality has dominated the study of democratisation. Based on this principle, it can be said that there are three main approaches to democratisation: 1) functionalist/political culture approach (Almond and Verba 1963 [1989], 1980 and 1989; Huntington 1991) 2) modernisation theory (Boix and Stokes, 2003; Lipset, 1994; Inglehart, 1988; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005) and 3) pact school/institutionalism (Przeworski, 1986; Przeworski and Limongi, 1997; Colomer, 1995; Higley and Burton, 1989; Lijphart, 1980; O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986). These are obviously very general classifications and the reader should keep in mind that, much like any other social science, the categorisation of theories in different schools is a subjective process open to the author's interpretation. Therefore, different authors may develop different categorisations based on different considerations⁶. This classification however, is based primarily on the relationships

⁶ For an example of categorisations not necessarily based on causality refer to Desfor Edles (1995) or Robert J Franzese (2007). Christian Welzel puts forward a broad distinction of types of democratisation based solely on whether or not democratisation is *responsive*; the main point of contention here is causality but he only makes a distinction between those democratisation processes that take place as a response to mass pressures and those that respond to other types of elites calculations (2009: 87).

of causality proposed by different approaches: functionalists/political culture proponents find a direct causal flow from mass values moving towards the political regime; modernisation theorists place the causal origin on socioeconomic development; pact school/elitist and institutionalism scholars claim that the origins of democratisation processes are found on elite arrangements and the institutional constructs that emerge, to varying degrees, from these pacts. I will now explore each approach individually.

1) *Political culture school*. The Political culture school, as put by David Laitin, had its 'hour upon the stage' in the 1960s (Laitin and Wildavsky, 1988: 549). Although since the late 1980s culturalists views have enjoyed a 'renaissance' (Inglehart, 1988) of sorts – this 'reinassance' itself has also been challenged (Jackman and Miller, 1996) – the bulk of its foundational work was indeed developed in the 1960s. In their ground-breaking work on the political orientation of culture, for instance, Almond and Verba (1963 [1989]) looked at five 'democracies' (they controversially considered Mexico to be a democracy) to provide a solid theoretical framework for the study and analysis of political cultures. Political culture is, according to them, the group of 'specifically political orientations-attitudes towards the political system and its various parts, and attitudes towards the role of the self in the system', hence, the 'political culture of a nation is the particular distribution of patterns of orientations towards political objects among the members of the nation' (*ibid*: 12-13). Based on Parsons' work (1951), they propose three levels of orientations applied to four different political objects. The three orientations are: 1) The cognitive orientation, defined as the knowledge and belief the members of the nation have about their political objects; 2) The affective orientation, understood to be the feelings about the political objects, its roles, its personnel and its performance; and 3) the evaluational orientation, which is the judgements and opinions about the political objects that typically involve the combination of value standards and criteria with information and feelings. The political objects they refer to are: 1) The system in general; this refers to the feelings, knowledge and judgements of how the nation looks at itself, whether it is 'big' or 'small', democratic, constitutional, socialist, 'strong', 'weak', etcetera; 2) the input objects refer to the process by which the citizens influence the government, or 'the flow of demands from the society into the polity and the conversion of these demands into authoritative policies' (*ibid*: 14); 3) the output objects refer to how the demands of society are applied (i.e. policies, bureaucracies, courts, the use and monopoly of force, etc.); and 4) the self as the object, or the content and quality of norms of personal political obligation, and the content and quality of the sense of personal competence vis-à-vis the political system (how effective can a citizen be at influencing the system).

Geoffrey Pridham (1991: 5-6) also bases his categorisation on causal factors but considers there are only two main schools – functionalist and genetic – that can group all the different approaches.

In fewer words, the political culture is the outcome of 'the frequency of different kinds of cognitive, affective and evaluational orientations towards the political system in general, its input and output aspects, and the self as political actor' (*ibid*: 16). Most culturalist scholars still adhere to this general idea of political culture or some slight variation of it. The rapid increase in the number of cross-National surveys that seek to qualify attitudes towards democracy around the globe (World Values Survey (WVS), Eurobarometers, European Values Studies, Freedom in the World Rating, etc.) could be seen as evidence of the enduring relevance of culturalist interpretations of democracy.

According to Robert Franzese (2007: 27-29), *The Civic Culture* represented not only a new way of thinking in terms of 'Western' democratic development, but it also transformed comparative politics; it was the early political culture scholars who gave democratisation studies a 'positive question'. Mainstream pre-war comparative political theory and thought had been more interested in describing (i.e. what, where and when) than explaining and predicting (i.e. 'what fosters stable, well-functioning democracy?'). Although the political culture school primarily considers sociocultural factors as the foundations for democratic consolidation, early proponents of the political culture theory stop short of establishing a straightforward causal correlation between mass values and democracy. This does not mean though that early political culture interpretations of democratisation were not highly deterministic; classical approaches to democracy went too far in placing an altogether exaggerated level of importance on pre-existing cultural conditions⁷. Newer versions of modernisation theory have tried to correct this problem but have failed in moving away from deterministic monocausal explanations (Boix and Stokes, 2003: 518-519; Inglehart, 1988; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005; Lipset, 1959: 75-85 and 1994: 2-3; Moore, 1966 [1993])

2) *Modernisation theory*. According to Karl Marx's conclusions, relationships emerging from the means of production are the ultimate factor that determines the development of productive forces and the cultural superstructures (*überbaus*) that support these forces; the Marxist view is that 'in order to enforce their interests, and to make them look more ethically grounded and acceptable to the (dominated) population at large, the dominant classes elaborate ideologies which legitimise their actions' (Heller, 2002: 140). Marxist explanations tend to see the cultural structure as little more than a tool of the capitalist elites, which is set from the top and is dominated by economic factors. This early tenet of modernisation theory has barely changed; modernisation theories tend to understand social and political changes as consequences of economic relations.

⁷ John Quincy Adams, for example, famously commented that schemes to establish democracy in South America appeared to him 'as absurd as similar plans would be to establish democracies among the birds, beasts, and fishes' (1815, in a letter to James Lloyd).

Although early versions of modernisation theory did not necessarily answer the positive question (i.e. how democracy comes to be consolidated), proponents of this approach – following the Weberian tradition of capitalist development (1905 [2003]) – unequivocally supported the view that democracy was a by-product of capitalism (Durkheim, 1933 [1997]; Lerner, 1958; Schumpeter, 1942 [2011]: 296-297). Despite there being differences between classic modernisation theorists they all agreed, to some extent, that modernisation was a single process transforming economic, social and political institutions (Fukuyama, 2011: 458-459). Although not without its challenges⁸, modernisation theory, and the view of democracy as part of a wider process (be it capitalism, industrialisation, development or modernity), has, one way or another, dominated the study of democratisation since the post-war era. As explained before, culturalist interpretations of democratisation did pose a challenge to modernisation theory's classic approach to democracy (i.e. that it is simply a stage of capitalist development). New modernisation theorists such as Ronald Inglehart (supported by the likes of Carles Boix and Susan Stokes) responded to this challenge by developing 'mixed' approaches to democratisation theory that include premises from the modernisation and political culture schools. However, the premise that 'economic development both causes democracy and sustains it' (Boix and Stokes, 2003: 545) has remained basically unchanged, and it probably still is the main point of criticism of modernisation theory.

Lipset's 1959 work on the social requisites of democracy is widely considered as the precursor of a new modernisation approach that explains development and democracy as a linear process. It was not until the late 1980s, and thanks mainly to the availability of new research techniques that made the acquirement and use of large data sets simpler and cheaper, that the theories proposed by the political culture and modernisation schools could be put to the test. Since then, new supporters of modernisation theory have put forward the theory that political cultures do not depend on the political structure, but rather that 'democratic institutions seem to depend on enduring cultural traits such as life satisfaction and interpersonal trust' (Inglehart, 1988: 1209)⁹. Despite the apparent prominence of mass values in this interpretation, Inglehart's theory remains firmly rooted in a modernisation paradigm. Although Inglehart seems to agree with the general notion that cultures are 'constantly evolving and endlessly porous' (Pagden, 2002: 22),

⁸ Diamond (1992: 473) explains how one of the earliest and most successful challenges to modernisation theory came from the dependency school of the 1960s and 1970s. He explains how, according to dependency scholars, socioeconomic development can lead to furthering authoritarian dictatorships as the elites in the peripheral countries choose to ally themselves with dominant countries and corporations abroad; these exclusionary alliances usually require 'political repression of popular mobilization to maintain low wage levels and high profit levels.'

⁹ Alongside Ronald Inglehart, Robert D. Putnam (1993 and 1995) has been one of the strongest proponents of the notion that social capital, understood as a combination of cultural traits including interpersonal trust and functional social networks, is necessary a prerequisite for democracy. However, Putnam is less concerned with the relationship between socioeconomic development and the prevalence of social capital or with causality (i.e. *why* democracy happens) as a whole.

he argues that the values and orientations that define political culture change solely as a result of socioeconomic development. He thus places a direct causal flow from socioeconomic development to political culture and then to political institutions. Despite his best efforts to avoid following the footsteps of early modernisation scholars and being labelled as an economic determinist, there is no doubt that his theory admits the existence of only one agent of change: socioeconomic development. This view completely clashes with sociological explanations of political culture. For political culture scholars, the political culture is always a part of a wider general culture; and cultures, by definition, have a tendency to reinvent themselves as processes of individual internalisation change (Pateman, 1971). In this interpretation, cultures are certainly 'constantly evolving and endlessly porous', but they are transformed by external factors (e.g. socioeconomic development or institutional changes) just as much as they are transforming themselves. An interpretation that sees socioeconomic development as the only reason for cultural change is a radical break from the political culture school.

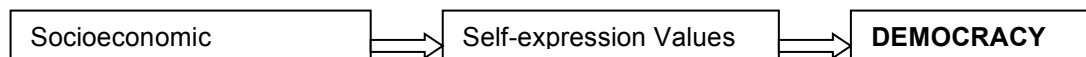


Figure 2.2. Inglehart and Welzel's model (2005)

3) *Pact school/elitists and institutionalism.* Critics of the modernisation and political culture schools emerge mainly from theorists of an institutionalist or elitist disposition such as Giovanni Sartori, Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe Schmitter and Arend Lijphart. While elite driven (or pact school) and institutionalist interpretations of democracy are not entirely the same, the history of transitions to democracy tells us that institutional changes are almost invariably the outcome of elite bargaining and elite pacts. Although historical institutionalism will be analysed in further detail in the fourth chapter, it is important to mention now that the path-dependence approach to political and/or social evolution (Pierson, 2000) suggests that institutional 'inertia' tends to limit the options available to key actors. This dynamic only changes at 'critical junctures' (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012: 110) when elites have the possibility to change path if the right incentives exist. In this view, institutional development and elite behaviour are reinforcing processes that lead to democratisation. The Spanish transition to democracy is a commonly used example of how specific agreements by elites on different sides of the political spectrum (*continuistas*, *reformistas* and *rupturistas*) led to bargaining, negotiation and eventual formal pacts (The Moncloa pacts of 1977 for example). Institutionalism claims that once democratic institutions have somehow been established (almost unavoidably through elite pacts), these then create the social capital and democratic cultures necessary for democratic consolidation. An argument often made by institutionalism is that there is a 'considerable reluctance on the part of civil society advocates to grant political institutions any role in producing the very same pro-democratic values and orientations believed to aid a flourishing civil society consolidating democracy' (Encarnación, 2001: 77).

In his analysis of the Spanish case, José María Magone (1996: xxii), for instance, suggests that although a 'democratic institutional setting has to be followed by a sustaining culture', this 'political systemic culture' is shaped, nourished and conditioned by political institutions. In his view, the political culture of a nation is consciously transformed by the political system through a planned selection of 'political experiences, institutions and beliefs' that help produce a 'congruent culture with the demands and dynamic of the political system' (*ibid*: 62). In this sense, political elites often shape the structures of the political system but are, at the same time, a product of those very same institutions. Therefore, as the political systemic culture is 'imposed by symbolic power through participation and socialisation structures' (*ibid*: 175) the elites who impose this structures help shape the political culture. However, how it is that political democratic institutions emerge is a different concern; what is important to understand here is, that for Magone, the system creates the culture and not the other way around. Following a similar trail of thought, Arend Lijphart (1980: 48) explains that institutions dictate the changes in political culture; the cognitive aspect of political cultures relates directly to the performance of the political institutions, therefore the way these behave will have a direct influence on the way they are perceived. What is more, the cognitive orientations are based on knowledge about the political system and, obviously, knowledge cannot be absent of the objective realities presented by this system.

Institutionalism and elite-driven approaches to democratisation also question the validity of modernisation theory. The exogenous approach to democratisation, for example, suggests that democracies 'may be established independently of economic development but may be more likely to survive in developed countries' (Przeworski and Limongi, 1997: 156-157), which is not the same as saying that socioeconomic development is the cause for democracy. The common story presented by modernisation theorists (i.e. that as authoritarian regimes achieve economic growth their societies become too complex and too technological to be controlled) is, in the opinion of Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi, without factual backing. Max Heller also believes that Inglehart's model does not consider the reverse effect of culture (values) on economic development (the Protestant theory) – or in comparative politics terms, Inglehart ignores the influence of endogeneity (Heller, 2002: 143). More radical elitist approaches argue that 'democratic transitions and breakdowns can best be understood by studying basic continuities and changes in the internal relations of national elites' (Higley and Burton, 1989: 17). This view explains that institutions (democratic or otherwise) that do not emerge from pacts by consensually unified elites do not have a long life expectancy. Therefore, 'unless regime changes are preceded by *elite transformations* – from disunity to consensual unity, in cases of democratic transition [...] – they should be regarded as strictly temporary' (*ibid*: 18).

Although elitists may recognise that other factors (such as socioeconomic development and mass values) may affect elite relationships in a country, they tend to ‘deny that such forces lead inexorably to democratic transitions or breakdowns’ (*ibid*: 29) and reaffirm a belief that transitions are down primarily to the way elites filter these forces. A clear problem with this view is that – as will be discussed in the fifth chapter – in most transitions to democracy, elites are not clearly separated between authoritarian hard-liners, moderate authoritarians, reformists and revolutionary opposition (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 65). What is more, although identifying elites in authoritarian regimes may be – to an extent – a relatively straightforward exercise, this dynamic is transformed during the period of ‘uncertainty’ that characterises transitions to democracy (O’Donnell and Schmitter, 1986: 4). If it is hard enough to identify the elites, it is ‘almost impossible to specify *ex ante* which classes, sectors, institutions, and other groups will take what role, opt for which issues, or support what alternative’ (*ibid*). This makes the idea of a pact-led transition hard to defend except in cases where there is a more or less clear distinction between different elite groups and their preferences. In Spain, for instance, the task of identifying Francoist hard-liners from reformers was considerably easier than in other countries. The emergence of ‘proto-parties’ and opposition groups such as the ‘Tácito’ group – formed by young and more or less anonymous politicians within the regime but who were already looking ahead to gaining a strong position in a future democratic regime – made the task of identifying the reformist faction of the regime’s elite relatively simple (Powell, 1990: 249); the ‘Tácticos’ had a clear profile (born shortly after the Civil War, university graduates, from Madrid or living in the capital, and most of whom ‘were in the service of the Francoist state’), met regularly in Madrid and used their links to the Catholic press to push for subtle reform (*ibid*: 250-252). In the case of Poland, on the other hand, the fear of the Stalinist hard-liners (the *beton*) slowed down the process of democratisation, only to be later exposed as nothing short of a fable conjured by the communist elites in an attempt to intimidate the opposition (Gentleman and Zubek, 1992: 65).

2.3.2 Multicausality in democracy

The classic models of democratisation explained until now have many points of contention and a countless number of critics. However, the unwillingness to accept alternative causal correlations is what ties them together. This is, however, not surprising; since econometric models and statistical analyses started to be applied to increasingly larger and more complex datasets, political scientists have developed a near obsession with causality. As David Landes points out (2000; 3), ‘economic analysis cherishes the illusion that one good reason should be enough, but the determinants of complex processes are invariably plural and interrelated’. Hence, a recent turn within comparative politics theory has led political scientists and

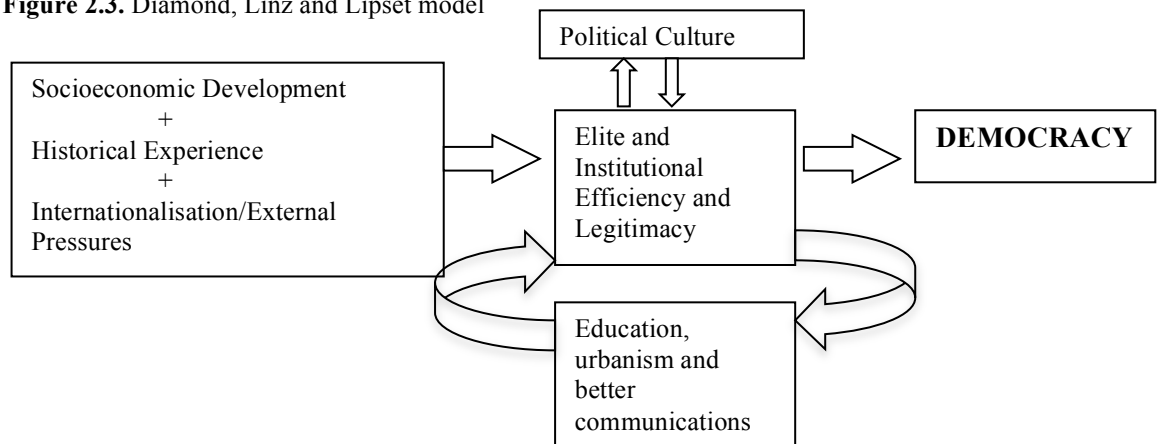
sociologists to believe in the 'identification of a specific mechanism – a causal pathway – as integral to causal analysis whether the model in question is formal or informal or whether the evidence is qualitative or quantitative' (Gerring, 2007: 92). Thus, without undermining the crucial contributions to democratisation theory from scholars such as Inglehart, Lijphart, Przeworski or Sartori, models such as those put forward by Linz and Stepan (1996: 1-80), Wolfgang Merkel (1998) or Diamond, Linz and Lipset (1995) provide, in my view, more complete explanatory frameworks. These models take into account that 'factors driving the development of any given political institution are multiple, complex, and often dependent on accidental or contingent events' (Fukuyama, 2011: 23). They also allow for the possibility to consider (with the probable exception of Merkel's model) the influence of endogeneity. For example, if we take Inglehart's hypothesis that culture (values and attitudes) causes democracy, we would have to consider the plausibility of the hypothesis that democracy causes democratic cultures; 'if so, causal models of the relationship between civic culture attitudes and democracy should be formulated to take into account the possibility of reciprocal causation between these variables' (Muller and Seligson, 1994: 635). I believe multicausal models can account for reciprocal causation far better than monocausal explanations.

Linz and Stepan's model, for instance, refers to five overlapping 'arenas' in which democratic change is necessary in order to be consolidated. These arenas are: a lively civil society, a relatively autonomous political society, rule of law, a usable state and an economic society (Linz and Stepan, 1996: xiv). We could say that, of the five arenas two fit into institutional considerations (rule of law and a usable state), two can be explained as culturalist variables (civil society and an independent political society), and one derives mainly from socioeconomic reasoning (economic society). Contrary to what institutionalism/pact school or modernisation theories propose 'democratic consolidation requires much more than elections and markets' (*ibid*: 6-7). Certainly elections are a *sine qua non* for any democratic regime whilst a free market economy can weaken authoritarian regimes, but clearly there is much more to democracy than that. The fact that the five 'arenas' interact and reinforce each other means that there are institutional, culturalist and socioeconomic factors constantly evolving during transitions to democracy.

In a similar vein, Diamond *et al.* (figure 2.2) agree with the notion that as socioeconomic growth takes place democracy becomes an ever-likelier outcome (therefore it is hard to find functional democracies in underdeveloped countries or undemocratic regimes in developed nations), however, they do not see economic growth as the only reason for democracy or for a transformation in political culture. In fact, they suggest that 'economic development is not a prerequisite for democracy' (Diamond *et al.* 1995: 24). They do admit that socioeconomic development can be a motor behind democratisation but they also place a great deal of

importance on other historical (previous experiences with democracy), external (openness of the economy, influence from abroad, pressure from abroad) and domestic (elite and institutional efficiency and legitimacy, urbanism, education) factors. This model also disagrees with the notion that a favourable political culture is a prerequisite for democratisation since 'cultural patterns and beliefs do change in response to new institutional incentives, socioeconomic development and historical experience' (*ibid*: 21). This model considers more than the relationship between socioeconomic growth and political culture; it considers the role the elites play (in promoting development and in shaping political culture), the effectiveness of new democratic institutions (which influences and is influenced by political culture) and the inability of undemocratic regimes to deal with a more urban and educated society through better means of communication.

Figure 2.3. Diamond, Linz and Lipset model



As well as the two models described before, Wolfgang Merkel proposes a 'multi-level' approach to explain democratic consolidation; in his view democratisation is a sequential process that goes from institutional consolidation to the democratisation of parties and electoral groups to the development of a political culture. In this process, however, the behavioural consolidation of potential veto actors (i.e. elite democratisation) can happen at any time during this process (1998: 40). Merkel's model, along with those proposed by Linz and Stepan and Diamond *et al.*, bring into the fore more than institutional arrangements, pacts, elite behaviour, socioeconomic development and cultural determinisms. By introducing variables such as historical experience, institutional efficiency and external influence they allow for more factors to interact as causal elements in democratic transitions. This helps explain why democracy is so hard to predict; history has proven that socioeconomic development is not enough to predict democratisation (Portugal embarked on its transition to democracy in 1975 with a GDP per capita of \$2,097 whilst Saudi Arabia remains firmly authoritarian with a GDP per capita exceeding \$15,000), and history has also shown us that clever institutional arrangements and elite pacts can crumble under the pressure of internal and external factors (The Weimar

Republic is a good example). The one thing that is clear from the emergence of multicausal models is that democracy is not that easy to achieve and there is no unique formula to achieve it, rather, a combination of factors have to act together by influencing different spheres of social and political life for democracy to become, as famously put by Linz and Stepan, 'the only game in town' (1996: 5).

2.4. The international dimension of democratisation

It is probably safe to say that the days when international considerations were ignored are now behind us. There certainly is an increasing amount of literature on the international dimension of democratisation and on democracy promotion strategies that recognises the new opportunities that the change in the international environment of the 1990s has opened (Dimitrova and Pridham, 2004: 91). Yet, not so long ago there was a distinct lack of attention being paid to the international context during transitions to democracy (Pridham, 1991: 1); indeed there was a time when the international context in democratic theory was relegated to a footnote. This had much to do with the prominence of the nation-state as the unit of analysis in classical comparative politics. But it was also an indication of how democratisation theories have tended to focus almost exclusively on the question of causality. It has been argued that unless democracy is directly imposed as a regime (e.g. Post-war Japan), there is no point in considering the international in what is an inherently domestic process. At the same time, international influence is harder to quantify than economic development, institutional efficiency or even cultural/mass value changes. This undoubtedly has played a role in the omission of international considerations from democratisation theories. Although cases such as Southern and post-communist Europe, and even Mexico, clearly validate the notion that international factors impact on transitions to democracy in significant ways, early democratisation theorists, bar a few notable exceptions (Garrett and Lang, 1995; Pridham, 1991 and 1995; Whitehead, 1986 and 1996), tended to either ignore (Ingehart; Inglehart and Welzel; Sidney and Verba; Przeworski and Limongi) or underestimate them (Boix and Stokes; Fukuyama; Higley and Burton; Huntington; Linz and Stepan). Again this is hardly surprising since democracy is by definition an inward-looking arrangement of political and social institutions, and as such, domestic factors will always play a more prominent role in democratisation. Most democratic transitions since the end of World War II have been processes dominated by domestic considerations, in which international factors have only been 'conducive' to change (Huntington, 1991: 58-108). Between 1945 and 2003 there are very few examples of authoritarian regimes being removed by force and replaced by democratic regimes; predictably, international causality has been rarely considered. The few who, particularly during the 1970s and 1980s, ventured into the unknown and tentatively explored the relationship between international considerations and regime transition, already called for an "unscrambling" of the

international dimension, for vague references to the “international climate” as broadly positive or negative do little to facilitate the analysis’ (Pridham, 1991: 9).

As a new era of democratisation studies dawns on us, however, it is becoming widely accepted that context matters. Multicausality and endogeneity are now accepted as reasonable explanations of why democracy is so hard to predict. ‘The conviction that many possible causal factors potentially operate in any given context’ (Franzese, 2007: 36) is in itself enough to challenge any theory that sees democratisation as a monocausal event. As said before, different approaches to democratisation that embrace this new principle have emerged in the last two decades (Diamond, Linz and Lipset 1995; Linz and Stepan 1996), and thus the attention put to the international dimension of democratisation has increased considerably. What is more, the academic interest in the international dimensions of democratisation has increased greatly due to the recent emphasis on policies of democracy promotion adopted by the United States, the EU and other democratic regimes (Brown and Kaufman, 2011:241). This in turn has led to a reformulation of democratisation theory in which the external dimensions of transitions to democracy are being seriously considered. Most of this recent work, though, focuses on democracy promotion instead of concerted projects of internationalisation. The apparently natural tendency that democracy has to ‘export itself’ has led, allegedly, to efforts to assist emerging democracies around the world. It is debatable whether or not democracies have to engage in direct activities that seek to export democracy or if democracies should settle with setting a good example. What is clear, though, is that policies of democracy promotion, assistance or diffusion are now being considered as elements in democratisation processes.

Despite these developments, however, there is still a need to explore how specific projects of internationalisation interact with democratisation processes. The fact is that democracy promotion activities are not the same as, or indeed may not even look to increase, internationalisation. At the same time, it is also true that the so-called third wave democratisations are taking place in an increasingly interlinked world. In spite of how easily the concept is thrown around, there is a need to account for the fact that as ‘globalisation’ advances, the salience of international actors in domestic politics increases – and as countries become more intertwined the significance of the dynamics of internationalisation in the processes of democratisation have to be reconsidered. Starting from a definition of the political system as a ‘patterned interaction of roles affecting decisions backed up by the threat of physical compulsion’ (Almond, 1956: 395) – in which roles are the groups (armies, bureaucracies, political parties, social groups, international context, etc.) conforming the system and the patterns are the orientations defining these interactions – one would be correct in assuming that changes in either the roles or the patterns (orientations) would translate into the transformation of the system. For example, ‘when the role of political communication is transformed by

technology this transforms the electoral process, political parties, etc.' (*ibid*: 396-397). In a similar vein, the increase in the salience (a patterned interaction) of the international context (a role of the political system) must be transforming the system.

With this in mind, there is evidence that suggests that international factors play an increasingly important role in democratisation processes, especially as socioeconomic development usually involves reforms that bring to the fore new cleavages sensitive to new international influences. If increased wealth, as argued by Lipset (1959: 83), 'affects the political role of the middle class through changing the stratification structure', we must ask why it is that an emerging middle class is likely to support democracy. As more internationalised elites sensitive to global developments emerge, so the explication goes, the old regimes find themselves unable to accommodate growing demands for access to international markets that are usually reserved for democratic countries (Holman, 1995: 35-39). As growth forces authoritarian regimes to internationalise their economies further they become more sensitive to 'stronger pressures from Western industrialised democracies – and from their own elites trained in Western (especially US) Universities' (Diamond *et al.*, 1995: 22). Once authoritarian regimes can no longer provide the conditions for continuing development, they lose support from the elites and population alike, and a process of political reform is then set in motion. At this point, both old and new elites will try to gain support and legitimacy; the old elites will desperately try to prove their reformist credentials to show they are willing to secure democracy whilst the new elites will try to prove they are capable of delivering democratic reforms. Non-political elites (the business class, civil society leaders, NGOs, union leaders and the likes) will also be expecting a clear compromise with reform; the recognition of the democratising efforts in one country by other democratic nations has a big impact on the legitimacy that the new democratic regime will have. If a new democratic regime, for example, joins an IO that holds a democratic clause (regardless of the willingness of the IO to enforce such clause), it will go a long way to prove the democratic credentials of the new regime (Pevehouse, 2002). Once a country is accepted into the democratic international community, getting expelled from it again can have serious political costs.

Regardless of how we choose to call this phenomenon, the fact is that as states become more interdependent, global events have a greater effect on national structures than ever before. The international debt crisis of the 1980s and the collapse of the Soviet Union, for example, were global events that had tremendous repercussions in domestic democratisations (Anderson, 1999: 6). If transitions to democracy were exclusively domestic processes we could not speak of 'waves of democratisation' since this term already implies that democratisations happen simultaneously in different countries. As international linkages grow so does the influence of international events. Following Linz and Stepan, we could refer to three different ways in which

internationalisation processes interact with transitions to democracy. First we should consider the direct impact foreign policies of regional hegemons have on their areas of influence; as mentioned earlier, the EEC's collective pro-democratic policies in Southern Europe helped their democratic consolidations, whilst the USSR's foreign policies effectively stopped transitions in Central Europe, and the United States' foreign policy of containment allowed some authoritarian regimes in Latin America to remain in power for longer than they had to. The second aspect to consider is the international zeitgeist effect; when democracy is the dominant ideology in a given geographical region, democracy is more likely to spread to the non-democratic countries in the region. The final factor is the diffusion effect, which refers to the principle that 'the more tightly a group of countries are, the more a successful transition in any country in the group will tend to transform the range of perceived political alternatives for the rest of the group' (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 73-76).

The effects above mentioned clearly do not affect every country in the same way, if that were the case, democratic waves would be far wider and deeper. To better understand how the effects of external factors influence individual transitions we have to identify the varying levels of linkage to and the potential for leverage of other democracies in each case (Levitsky and Way, 2005 and 2010). Leverage refers primarily to the 'power' a given democracy (or group of democracies) has over an authoritarian regime or the amount of pressure it is willing and able to put onto that regime to democratise. For example, if a regime is dependent on specific economic ties with, or direct aid flowing from a given democracy, that democracy can choose to exert or not exert substantial leverage in a push to democratise that country. Whilst leverage (i.e. the use of 'power' or the threat to use it) can increase the cost of repression, electoral fraud or other government abuses, thus playing a role in ending full-on authoritarian regimes, it is rarely sufficient to persuade regimes to fully democratise (Levitsky and Way, 2005: 22). When leverage is combined with international linkage to Western democracies it becomes a truly effective democratising factor. Unlike leverage, linkage works at economic, geopolitical, social, communications and civil society levels thus penetrating several areas of the state. Linkage not only raises the costs of undemocratic behaviour for the governing elites but also for everybody else. Businesses not only benefit financially from linkage but they also learn to play by democratic rules; civil society groups not only benefit from the support of organisations with similar aims in other countries but they also learn how to organise themselves better to defend democracy; a better educated mass of technocrats benefit from being part of a wide network of countries where they can perform their trade, expand their businesses or attend universities; wide sectors of society benefit from access to a wide range of information sources, entertainment, travel and technology. In short, 'when linkage is extensive, international influences may be decisive, contributing to democratisation with highly unfavourable domestic conditions' (*ibid*: 33). This is a key point to be developed later in the thesis since, by all means,

it seems clear that Mexico's transition took place in a context of extremely high linkage but very low leverage (Levitsky and Way, 2010: 153-155), whilst Spain's transition took place in a rather different context of high linkage and high leverage.

2.5. Breaking the mould: from transition to consolidation, hybrid regimes and competitive authoritarianism

It is essential for the objective of this thesis to analyse the different levels of success transitions to democracy can achieve; after all, the main premise of this thesis is that, despite the many current problems with the Spanish political and economic models, the Spanish transition has been, simply put, more successful than the Mexican. Undoubtedly, many of the recent pan-European challenges have led to a diminished quality of the Spanish (and indeed other EU countries') democracy. According to a recent report, 'the erosion of sovereignty and democratic accountability associated with the effects of and responses to the euro zone crisis' (Economist Intelligence Unit 2011: 2) is to blame for this regression. Indeed, some critics of the European neoliberal model have gone as far as to propose the 'Latinoamericanisation' of Europe's political system (*El Pais* 21/10/2012). Such a suggestion would have been unthinkable 25 years ago when political scientists could confidently – and with good reasons – claim that the Southern European experience with democratisation had been 'a remarkable success, contrasting sharply with the record in Latin America' (Whitehead, 1986: 38). Either way, if one looks at any of the many rankings that seek to qualify democracy, one would find that Spanish democracy is still faring a lot better than Mexico's. Evidence put forward from the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (table 2.1.) already suggests that Spanish 'quality of government' is higher than Mexico's. Even more so, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index (table 2.2), Spain has been a 'full democracy' from their first report (2007) until their last (2011), albeit Spain has dropped a few places in the last year (from 17th in 2010 to 25th in 2011) and is just holding on to its 'full democracy status'. Mexico on the other hand has been consistently categorised as a 'flawed democracy' and has been unable to break into the top 50. Even more impressively, according to the Polity IV project Spain has maintained its status as a 'full democracy' since it reached it in 1977 whilst Mexico, having reached 'democratic' status in 1997, is yet to reach the 'full democracy status' (Polity IV, 2011). At the same time, this data (as can be seen in table 2.3) shows the contrasting natures of both transitions; the Spanish signalling a clear break with autocracy whilst Mexico's has been a protracted process. Just as indicative is the Freedom in the World index, which shows Spain as a freer country than Mexico since its transition to democracy in 1977 up until 2010 (table 2.4). This simple categorisation, however, cannot paint a complete picture and should not be considered as an ultimate guideline. One must not forget that this, just like any other typology, represents the arbitrary criteria of its methodology. Nevertheless, these indicators suggest that

the Spanish transition to democracy has been, in plain words, more successful.

The end of the Cold War brought such an unprecedented increase in the standing, desirability and prestige of democracy that it almost became the uncontested regime of choice. The general view was that 'under pressure from the forces of scientific and technical progress and market production, liberal democracy had triumphed, this time on global scale. Something like the "end of history" was unfolding before the eyes of the world' (Keane, 2009: 699). This, at the very least symbolic, triumph was short lived; it soon became evident that many of the regimes that appeared so eager to embrace a democratic system were either not prepared or not willing to do so. This state of perennial democratisation – of which Mexico was something of a pioneer (Aguayo Quezada, 2010a: 24) – led to a wide amount of literature that dealt with this phenomenon. It soon became evident that rather than dealing with regimes 'moving' towards democratic consolidation or towards democratic regression, these were a new type of 'hybrid regimes'. Any number of adjectives describing these 'hybrid regimes' emerged in quick succession, including 'electoralist', 'populist', 'delegative' and 'illiberal'. Of these sub-types of 'diminished forms of democracy' it is probably the latter two that are best known. 'O'Donnell's notion of "delegative democracy" denotes a political system in which institutional checks and balances are weak or insufficient, allowing the executive to centralise power' (Bernhagen, 2009: 36); whilst Zakaira's concept of 'illiberal democracy' refers to a similar notion but instead of placing the democratic weakness on the balances to the executive he places it on the rule of law and the protection of civil liberties (*ibid*). Although not without value, these interpretations still fail to define these new regimes in their own terms and are still being understood as somehow democratic, e.g. almost democratic but there is no accurate balancing of power, or almost democratic but the rule of law is not entirely upheld. I believe the use of adjectives to qualify democracy could imply that these regimes are striving to be democratic when this may not necessarily be the case.

What is more, the use of adjectives to qualify democracy provides the non-democratic forces within these regimes a certain degree of legitimacy. Aguayo Quezada (2010a: 24), for example, argues that in the case of Mexico the reluctance shown by the academic community (he is very critical of Linz, Schmitter and O'Donnell) to label the PRI regime as outright authoritarian, unlike Franco's Spain, gave the regime a certain amount of leeway with the international community. Although, he goes on to imply that there was some sort of hidden agenda behind the inability of the academic community to categorise the PRI regime, which seems rather unjustified, Aguayo Quezada does have a point. This explains in part why new typologies such as 'competitive authoritarianism' attempted to explain the functioning of hybrid political regimes where 'elections were meaningful enough that they reflected much of the electorate's preference even if they were still plagued by problems of fraud and manipulation' (Brownlee,

2009: 130). Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way (2010: 4), two of the earlier proponents of this new typology along with Larry Diamond (2002), have confidently declared that the ‘assumption that all hybrid regimes are (or should be) moving in a democratic direction lacks empirical foundation’, therefore concepts that reflect this reality ought to be developed. A clear advantage of using this intermediate categorisation is that it offers a theoretical framework that allows us to explain democratic evolutions. In this sense, although there will be some allusions in this thesis to democratic consolidation (during the sixth chapter in particular), this refers more to a mere chronological division (the stage that follows the alternation in power) than to an expectation of irreversibility. After all, recent evidence seems to back the argument that ‘even democracy in “developed societies” is neither unavoidable or irreversible’ (Merkel, 1998: 42).

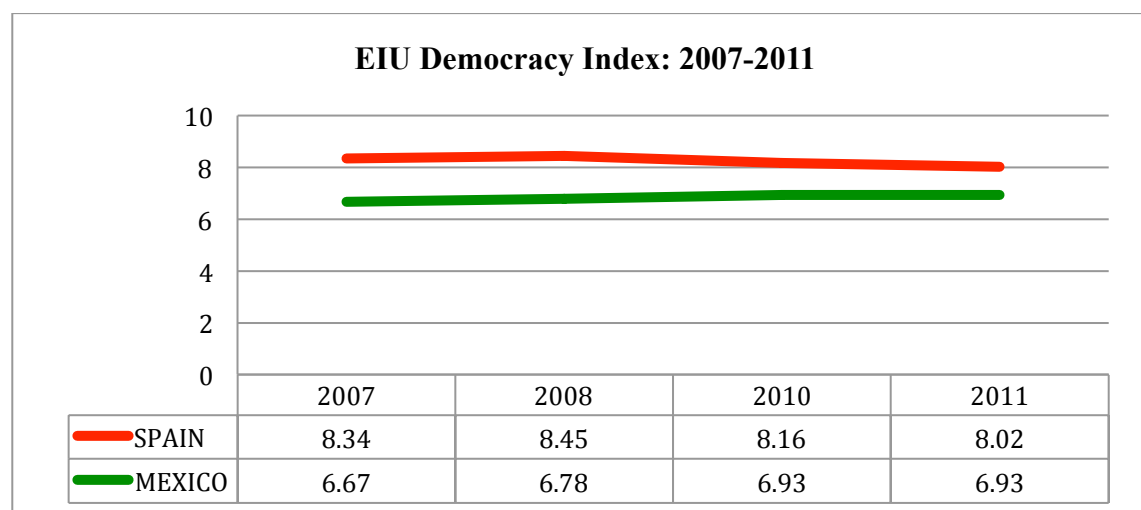


FIGURE 2.4. *Democracy Index 2007, 2008, 2010, and 2011.* Measure five criteria (electoral processes, functioning of government, political participation, and civil liberties) on a scale from 0 to 10. The averages of these measurements are taken to get a final score; from 8-10 ‘full democracies’, 6 to 7.9 ‘flawed democracies’, 4 to 5.9 ‘hybrid regimes’, and 0 to 4 ‘authoritarian regimes’.

However, it must be kept in mind that although competitive authoritarian regimes may be institutionally closer to democratic regimes it does not mean that there are any guarantees that they will ever become democratic. The main difference between democracy and competitive authoritarianism often relates to, although not always, the fairness of the election – in particular the need to have a level playing field (Levitsky and Way, 2010: 7). This may seem to be less of an obstacle than, say, the whole reformulation of the state (*à la* post-Communist Europe) but that is not always the case. According to Steven Levitsky and Lican Way, Mexico went from being an ‘electoral authoritarian regime between the 1920s and mid-1980s’ to becoming a textbook example of competitive authoritarianism following the 1985 legislative race and finally culminating in a democracy in 1997 (*ibid*: 153) (this is, of course, highly debatable); all these political transitions took place in the electoral arena and through electoral reforms in what has been referred to as Mexico’s ‘voted transition’ (Merino, 2003). On the other hand, Spain’s transition took the country from authoritarianism to a strong market economy within the framework of integration into Europe, similar level of welfare indicators to Western European

levels, a robust democracy (Waisman, 2005: 1-3), an internationalised new bourgeoisie (Poulantzas, 1976) and a psychological transformation of Spanish society (Wiarda, 1989: 4)... and all without ever being anything like a competitive authoritarian regime (figure 2.2 clearly shows how Spain went from 'autocracy' to 'full democracy' between 1975 and 1980). Other examples can be found in the Middle East; the Iranian regime has been, for a number of years, seriously challenged in the electoral arena by a democratic opposition, whilst Mubarak's Egypt did not face such challenges (Brownlee, 2009:131). Regardless, it is Mubarak who was forcefully ousted from the top of the Egyptian regime whilst Iran's Islamist government seems to be gaining stability. This goes to show that competitive authoritarian regimes are not a 'halfway house' where countries patiently work on their full 'recovery'. Whether Mexico in particular has transited from authoritarianism to democracy via competitive authoritarianism, as claimed by Levitsky and Way, will be discussed in detail throughout the next chapters.

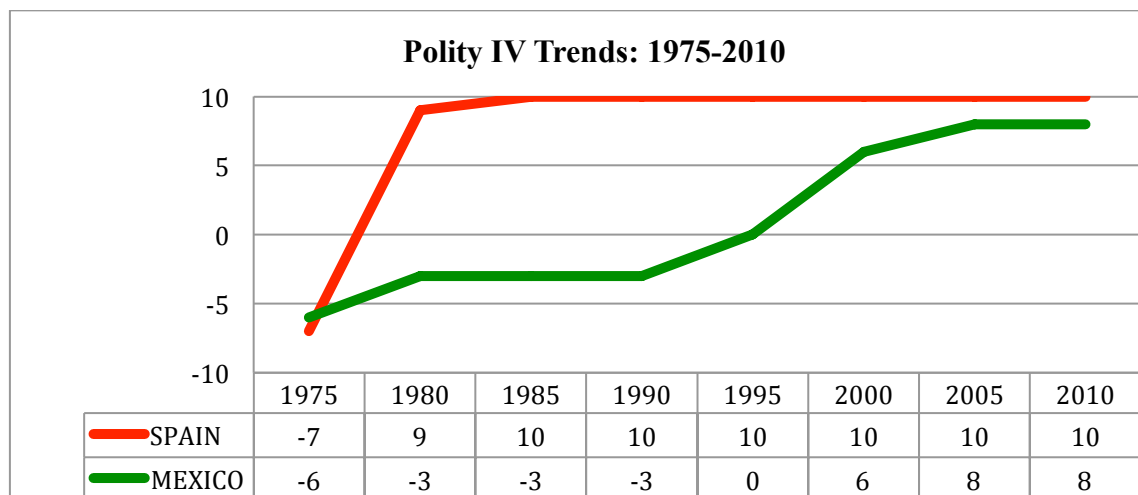


FIGURE 2.5. *Polity IV Project: Political Regimes Transitions and Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2010.* A scale from -10 to 10 is applied; 10 'being full democracy', 6 to 9 being 'democracy', 1 to 5 'open autocracy', -5 to 0 'closed anocracy', and -10 to -6 'autocracy'.

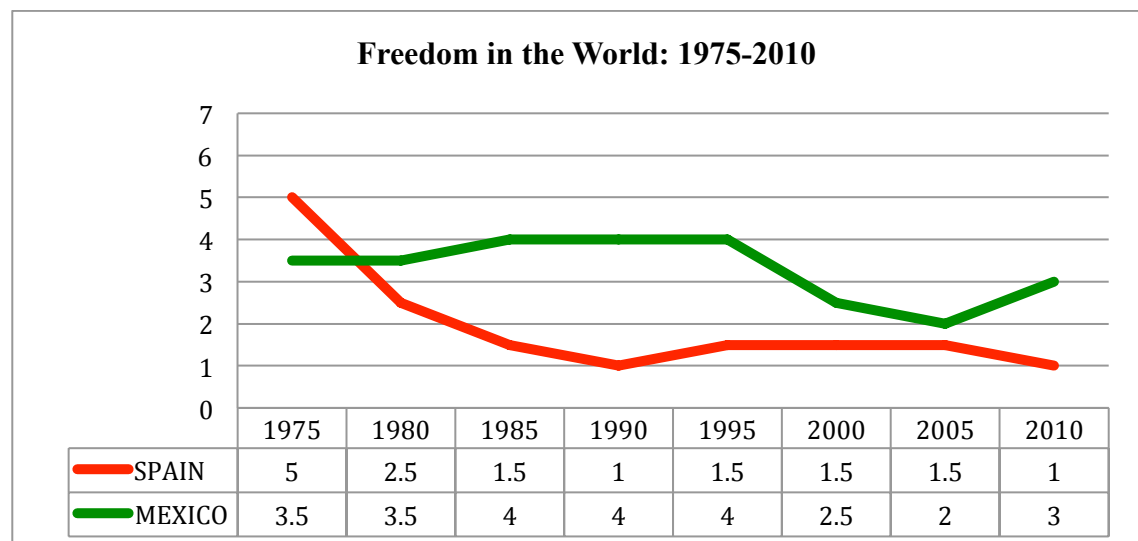


FIGURE 2.6. *Freedom in the World, Freedom House.* The values are the average score between the two criteria measured by freedom House (Political Rights and Civil Liberties); 1 represents the most free and 7 the least free.

CHAPTER III: Contrasting Internationalisations: 'Critical junctures' and Institutional Transformations

This chapter marks the beginning of the analysis of the case studies. Whilst the previous two chapters have set the tone for the comparison and only touched on the case studies intermittently, this chapter will engage fully with the comparison of the processes of democratisation and internationalisation in Spain and Mexico. Having said this though, it has to be pointed out that this comparison will go from the general to the particular. With this in mind, this chapter will, first and foremost, present an overall comparison between the European and North American projects of regionalisation. The reasons for starting with this overall comparison are that, in the first instance, it will allow the readers to familiarise themselves with the context of the case studies, and it will also present a wider explanation of why a comparison between Mexico and Spain is justified. Although I do not disagree with the notion that the process of European integration – and its inherent process of Europeanisation – is unique in the way it formalises links of interdependence (Closa, 2001: 16-17), I do not agree with the idea that the process of European integration is so different to the North American process of regionalisation to render a comparison futile. In fact, the second part of this chapter analyses two institutional transformations (decentralisation and political parties) that were not exempt from being influenced by the two processes of internationalisation despite the clear differences between the two – particularly in their respective levels of institutionalisation. As the second part of this chapter will show, the fact that NAFTA was a weakly institutionalised project (in the sense that almost no institutions emerged from the agreement, nor were any transformations of the pre-existing institutions explicitly required) did not mean that joining NAFTA did not have some indirect repercussions on Mexico's institutional arrangement. The analysis of the decentralisation processes in Mexico will evidence how its internationalisation project played some part (albeit rather limited) in this process. The main idea is that NAFTA, despite attempts to limit its repercussions at institutional level, had an impact (or at least increased the likelihood of international actors having an impact) in Mexico's institutional evolution. What is important to note here is not if Mexico's internationalisation had less of an impact at an institutional level (we can assume it did), but rather that the EEC's stronger institutional framework helped shape these transformations in a more democratic way, whilst NAFTA's weak institutionalisation and the United State's (and Canada's) lack of engagement failed to offer similar encouragement.

3.1. Contrasting projects of regional integration

Although it has been tried before (Gienaris, 1998; Pastor, 2001; Rosenberg, 1992; Sweet, 1999; Vega-Cánovas, 1999), more or less straightforward comparisons between North American regionalisation and the EU tend to either ignore or exaggerate historical and structural

differences between the regions, or tend to see the EU as a strict model of integration that is impossible to replicate, or simply have rather unclear methodologies (it is, for example, not clear what they are comparing or why (e.g. Sweet, 1999)). The two regions under analysis here are indeed very different in the arrangements, their goals and their capabilities. From its conception NAFTA was designed with the objective of developing a free trade block rather than, strictly speaking, a project of regional integration; something closer to the alternative European Free Trade Association (EFTA) that Britain launched in 1960 'in reaction to the establishment of the EEC' (Pinder, 2001: 125) than to an EU type of organisation (Chanona, 2003: 79). In any case, despite the many clear difficulties involved in a straightforward comparison between the EU and NAFTA, I find it necessary to open this analysis with a broad description of the similarities and differences between the two projects.

First and foremost, however, it must be remembered that, despite the sheer size of the EU today, the process of European integration had a rather modest beginning and took decades to gather momentum. It is true that the process of European integration quickly unfolded after World War II but this was by no means the first attempt at constructing a federal Europe. Several attempts at reaching some degree of integration in the region were carried out long before the war. It would be fair to say that by the time a concrete institutional evolution towards integration was set in motion by the Treaty of Rome of 1951, a European 'federalist movement' had been 'building steam for decades, [or] even centuries' (Dinan, 2006: 301). The Briand Plan of 1929, which aimed to bring about the 'final liquidation of War' (Stirk, 1996: 34) in Europe, is probably the most significant of these attempts. Aristide Briand, who served as France's Foreign Minister between 1925 and 1932, already envisaged then a 'moral union of Europe' that would subordinate the economic problems to the political ones (Davies, 1996: 951). Briand's plan did not have many immediate consequences as the Wall Street Crash and the first electoral success of the Nazis in Germany, which quickly followed the official launch of the plan in 1929, destroyed any hopes of it being taken seriously (*ibid*). What is more, even after the Second World War European integration did not enjoy anything resembling universal support. Some European federalists, and after 1947 a growing number of key American policy-makers, saw integration as 'the only way to put an end to the continent's recurring civil wars' (Stirk, 1996: 53). Yet at a grassroots level the idea was far from popular. During the war the Third Reich presented itself as 'a guardian of European independence against American imperialism and Russian Bolshevism' (*ibid*: 65) and appropriated the slogan of European integration. Somehow unsurprisingly then, the idea of integration remained tainted after the war (*ibid*: 51). Although popular support was eventually gathered, the initiation of the process of European integration was far from straightforward and has to be understood as an elite-driven process.

Once we consider the troublesome beginnings of the EU, drawing parallels between European integration and NAFTA may begin to make more sense. This is particularly the case if we consider that, as Robert Pastor (2004: 36-38) points out, both projects were originated by fear. The key difference is that Europe managed to move on from 'negative integration'¹ simply because the fear that motivated this process was greater than the one motivating integration in North America. In Europe integration was about survival (Pastor, 2004: 36; 2001: 8), whilst in North America it was about Mexico and Canada securing access to the United States market amid fears American protectionism was to re-emerge (*ibid*: 38). Although this may be one of the key differences between the two projects, there are, of course, other dissimilarities that have to be considered in the parameters that limit and shape integration in both regions (table 4.1).

PARAMETER	EU	NAFTA
1. Origin	Trauma following the War and fear of continuing 'civil wars'.	Fear of losing access to the American market.
2. Objectives	Unity, solidarity and a common market	Competitive markets and low tariffs.
3. Policy towards regional imbalances	Reduce and/or eliminate imbalances.	No policy.
4. Composition	Equality amongst members; one member one vote	Disparity.
5. Security basis	String structure through NATO and the Common Foreign and Security Policy/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.	Merida Initiative.
6. Institutions and Sovereignty	EU Parliament, Commission and European Council. Shared Sovereignty.	Sovereignty resides with national governments; minimal institutions (Secretariat, ad hoc dispute settlement mechanisms and NADB).
7. Ideology	Coordinated market economy; welfare state.	Free market and resolution of disputes/controversies within the parties.

Table 3.1 Key differences in parameters of integration between NAFTA and EU. Based on Pastor, 2004: 37. Modified by the author.

Despite these clear differences in the origins and objectives of both projects, we can find certain similarities in their respective (particularly early) evolutions. It is more or less accepted that the very first direct precedent of what is now the EU, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), intended to achieve political objectives (i.e. avoiding war between France and Germany) through economic means. Within the framework of what was the very ambitious Schuman Plan of 1950, the ECSC was part of a 'far reaching package of economic military and political institutions' that would 'form the foundation for a United States of Europe' (Davies,

¹ John Pinder argued that although 'negative and positive integration together compromise economic integration, whose end is economic union' (1968: 90), the latter cannot take place without first going through the three stages of negative integration – a free trade area, a customs area and a common market (Vega-Cánovas, 1999:228). In other words, negative integration entails 'the removal of discrimination', whilst positive integrations refers to the 'formation and application of coordinated and common policies in order to fulfil economic and welfare objectives other than the removal of discrimination' (Pinder, 1968: 90), i.e. an economic union in the first instance and total economic integration after that (Vega-Cánovas, 1999:228).

1996: 1084). Although the military and political institutions failed to take off (NATO already provided a strong military framework and the Council of Europe had just started as a 'weak' form of political cooperation in Europe), the ECSC, which was by all accounts a success, still had clear political goals. The Treaty of Paris, which established the ECSC, spelled out what would be the overriding political objective of European integration. Its preamble clearly articulates that the ultimate goal was 'to create, by establishing an economic community, the basis for a broader and deeper community among peoples long divided by bloody conflicts' and to 'lay the foundations for institutions which will give direction to a destiny henceforward shared' (Treaty Establishing the European Coal and Steel Community, 1951). These few lines clearly stipulate that economic objectives were to be subordinated to what is, ultimately, a political goal. Yet, the treaty in itself is an economic arrangement limited to the production of Coal and Steel. Undoubtedly these were the two most important industries in 1951 and, arguably, a seemingly unresolvable source of conflict that stemmed from France and Germany's natural tendency to seek control over the large iron ore reserves in Alsace and Lorraine. But be that as it may, the Treaty of Paris was still primarily an economic agreement.

At the same time, free trade and a customs union were not introduced until the Treaty of Rome in 1957, and the common market was not truly consolidated until the Single European Act (SEA) came into effect in July 1987. Indeed, before the SEA came into effect the European Community the Treaty of Rome founded was 'still little more than a customs union, supplemented by an expensive and wasteful agricultural policy' (Stirk, 1996: 208), and terms like 'Eurosclerosis' and 'Europessimism' were common terms used to describe the 'dismal state that Europe was in' during the 1970s (Griffiths, 2006: 187). On the political front the Community seemed unable to 'develop a defence profile, or even to consolidate a common foreign policy' (Stirk, 1996: 208). The Council of Europe, which was established as a parallel political process to that started by the Treaty of Rome, had no supranational power (Messenger, 2006: 40) and had the 'minimalist mandate', mainly due to British reservations (*ibid*; Dinan, 2006: 300-301), to 'promote European unity by debate, publicity and research' (Davies, 1996: 1083). The pessimism was such that *The Economist* even decided to close its Brussels office in 1982 and the cover of its now infamous 20th March issue of the same year mischievously announced the death of the EEC (Ludlow, 2006: 222). Greater political integration was not properly achieved until the late 1980s and early 1990s when, under the leadership of Jacques Delors, the Maastricht Treaty and the process of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) were set in motion. It was this Europe, the Europe of 'eurosclerosis' and 'Europessimism' that Spain applied to join in July 1977. Considering all of the above, a comparison between the international dimension of the Spanish transition (undoubtedly dominated by the parallel process of integration with the EEC), and the international dimension of the Mexican transition

(similarly shaped by the country's desire to integrate with North America) starts to make much more sense.

Having said this though, the similarities between the process Spain embarked on when integrating with Europe and the process Mexico started when proposing North American integration, should not distract us from the equally significant differences. After all, the focus of this thesis is on the differences of the internationalisation projects rather than the similarities. A quick comparison between the carefully worded text of NAFTA, and the ambitious and exuberant text that delineated the grand vision for Europe in the preamble to the Treaty of Rome – which established the European Economic Community in 1957 – is all the evidence we need to convince us of the different context in which both projects set out. NAFTA's preamble is, understandably, characterised by a sober tone that avoids any hint of it being, in any way, anything else than an agreement to 'strengthen the special bonds of friendship and cooperation amongst the nations' by creating an 'expanded and secure market for the goods and services produced in their territories' (North American Free Trade Agreement, 1992: preamble). The leaders of the three countries, in what has been described as a 'potent symbol', even signed the treaty (all five volumes!) individually in their respective capitals. All this helped reinforce the main sentiment behind NAFTA: Canada, the United States and Mexico 'were together but also separate' (Pastor, 2011: 54).

In stark contrast, the Treaty of Rome, which followed the comparably grandiose style of its predecessor Treaty of Paris, looked to 'strengthen the unity' of the economies of the signing members 'to ensure their harmonious development by reducing the differences existing between the various regions and the backwardness of the less favoured regions' (Treaty of Rome, 1957: preamble). In essence both treaties established a similar broad objective, i.e. to strengthen the unity, or at least the 'bonds of friendship', between the signatories by economic means. Yet, whilst the NAFTA text only goes as far as setting the objective of creating a 'secure market', the Treaty of Rome already establishes a desire to correct economic imbalances within Europe. What is more, whilst the NAFTA text does mention the rather ambiguous goal of creating 'new employment opportunities' and improving 'working conditions and living standards', it makes it clear that this goal will be the responsibility of each individual country 'in their respective territories'. In other words, cooperation in these areas is off the table. On the other hand, The Treaty of Rome established the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF), which were created (the ESF in particular) 'in order to improve employment opportunities for workers in the common market and to contribute thereby to raising the standard of living'. (Treaty of Rome, 1957: Art. 123). The social element embedded in the process of European integration will be analysed in detail in the sixth chapter, but for now it is important to point out that whilst NAFTA saw development as a problem of the

individual nations, the EU, from its very origins, considered development, employment, correcting imbalances and the raising standard of living as a common challenge.

3.1.1 European multilateralism vs. ad hoc economic cooperation and ‘dual bilateralism’

Another significant difference that has to be acknowledged – and one that had some bearing on the transitions to democracy in both countries – is the multilateral nature of European integration *vis a vis* the distinctly ‘dual-bilateral’ nature of NAFTA. NAFTA is formally a trilateral agreement between the United States, Mexico and Canada, yet nothing about the agreement seems to be trilateral in the conventional sense. In reality, the lack of any multilateral institutions in NAFTA, which is characterised (especially in comparison to the EU) by the asymmetry between the three countries (Pastor, 2011: 18), has led to the treaty functioning basically as two bilateral treaties: one between the United States and Canada, and another between the United States and Mexico. Mexico’s relationship with Canada before NAFTA was basically non-existent (diplomatic relations between the two governments were only established in 1944, whilst full diplomatic relations with the US were established in 1927 – even Argentina established diplomatic relations with Canada four years before Mexico did) and, although trade has increased since then, ‘the Mexican-Canadian leg of the triangle remains weak and overshadowed by the other two legs’ (*ibid*: 149). Similarly, according to a Special Task Force set up by the Council on Foreign Relations, by 2005 over 80 per cent of Mexican and Canadian trade was with the NAFTA partners, yet American trade with its North American partners represented less than one third of its total (Council on Foreign Relations, 2005: 1); this is a clear indication of just how much more important the United States is to Mexico and Canada, than Mexico and Canada are for the United States.

What is more, the Special Task Force report fails to convey the bilateral nature of trade. In 2005 Mexico’s exports to Canada (as table 4.2 shows) represented a mere 1.98 per cent of its total exports, compared with the staggering 85.68 per cent – over \$214 billion – that exports to the United States represented. Even exports to the EU (4.27 per cent) represented a higher percentage of the country’s total exports, and exports to Germany alone were not far from those to Canada. Imports from North America to Mexico in 2005 were similarly dominated by the United States (representing over 95 per cent), whilst Canada’s share of the total imports was less than 3 per cent – behind Japan, China, Germany and South Korea. In real terms the EU was Mexico’s second biggest trading partner in 2005. Even if we were to consider the year 2000 rather than 2005, when North America apparently reached its highest level of integration, we find that the dynamic in the ‘trilateral’ relationship was very much the same (table 4.2). The destination of over 88 per cent of Mexican exports was the United States compared to 2.15 per cent that were directed to Canada. Again even in 2000 – the very first year after the Mexico-EU

'Global Agreement' came into effect – total Mexican exports to the EU were higher than the exports to Canada.

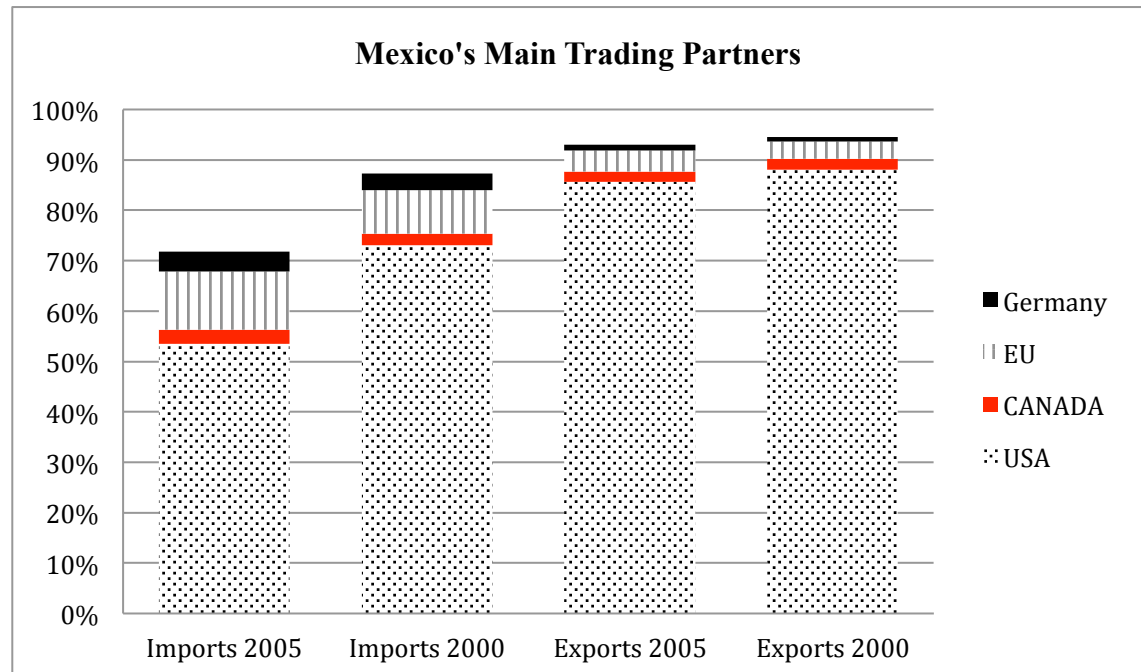


Figure 3.2. Share of total Mexican exports and imports in 2000 and 2005. With data from the Secretaría de Economía/Subsecretaría de Comercio Exterior.

Certainly there is much more to international relations and internationalisation than trade, and thus the data presented above only looks at part of the picture. It is also true that the sheer size of the American economy explains why the United States has been and will be, at least for the foreseeable future, the biggest trading partner for both Canada and Mexico. Having said this though, the dual bilateral nature of trade in North America does indicate there is a worrying disparity. After all, the American economy and market are certainly larger than Canada's, but neither the United States economy nor its market size (population) is 40 times the size of Canada's. Factors such as geography and a distinct lack of infrastructure help explain these uninspiring figures. Yet this cannot be the sole reason. Indeed, political leaders in both countries have preferred to focus on a bilateral agenda with the United States rather than focusing on a trilateral approach. Although some timid attempts were made during the early stages of NAFTA to develop a stronger relationship between the two nations, both Canadians and Mexicans, weary of hurting the sensibilities of the colossus, quickly returned to the bilateral nature of the relationship (Pastor, 2001: 13). Leaders in both countries were unwilling to serve the others' purposes or, indeed, neither government was willing to raise American suspicions that their collaboration was intended to undermine the position of the United States in the region (*ibid*).

The diplomatic links between Mexico and Canada compared to those with the United States also suggests a clear difference in the value each country accords its relationship with each

other. Today Mexico has only five consular offices in Canada (Calgary, Leamington, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver) compared to the almost fifty consular representations it has in the United States – including representations in Anchorage, Alaska (with a population of less than 300,000) and Little Rock, Arkansas (with a population of less than 200,000) – plus the newly established ‘mobile consulates’ that serve smaller communities around the United States’ territory. Again, the sheer number of Mexicans residing in the United States explains this enhanced presence but there is no doubt where the priority for Mexico lies. Similarly, Canada has only two Consular offices in Mexico (not including the consular section of the embassy) compared to the fourteen in the United States (again ignoring the consular section of the embassy). Although the main function of the Consular offices is to provide assistance to their respective nationals and undertake other administrative procedures, they also serve as points of contact for businesses and individuals.

Further evidence of the clear priority Canada and Mexico give to their bilateral relation with the United States over the relation with each other can be seen in their Ambassadorial appointments. Compared to the sequence of Mexican Ambassadors to the United States since the late 1980s, which includes two former Finance Secretaries (Gustavo Petrocioli Iturbide and Jesús Silva-Herzog Flores), a former Energy Secretary and then Director General of Pemex (Jesús Reyes-Heroles González-Garza), and currently the former director of the Mexican intelligence services (CISEN), former Attorney General and Ambassador to the United Kingdom (Eduardo Medina Mora), the list of Mexican Ambassadors to Canada in the same period is, shall we say, far less impressive. It includes a former governor of Chiapas (Jorge de la Vega Domínguez), a couple of career diplomats (Alfredo Phillip Olmedo and Sandra Fuentes-Beraine), and, probably most telling of all, a certain Ezequiel Padilla Couttelonc, who served as ambassador to Canada between 1998 and 2001. The appointment of such a low-key figure at a time when NAFTA was in its heyday is rather telling. Padilla Couttelonc was neither a career diplomat nor a particularly high-ranking politician. Before taking the role as Ambassador to Canada, he was a Tourism Undersecretary, an Ambassador to the Netherlands and then to Switzerland, and he ended his diplomatic career as a General Consul in Dallas, Texas. Indeed, according to the Mexican publication *Proceso* (3/4/1993 and 19/4/1986), his career probably benefited greatly from his family ties to the PRI (he is the son of the former Secretary of Foreign Affairs under President Manuel Ávila Camacho). In short, the appointment of such a figure to the Embassy in the United States would be unthinkable, and thus helps us understand the value the Mexican government puts on its relationship with Canada.

At the other end of the spectrum we have the process of European integration, which has been, from its outset, a clearly multilateral process. Certainly the immediate objective of the process of European integration that was set in motion in the 1950s was to deal with the geopolitical

propensity France and Germany had to go to war. As such, the initial steps towards integration had France and Germany at the very core. The Schuman declaration of 1950, for example, which launched the plan of the same name, explicitly referred to this immediate objective. After recognising that 'Europe will not be made all at once', the declaration proposed that 'the coming together of the nations of Europe requires the elimination of the age-old opposition of France and Germany', and that any action taken in the direction of integration 'must in the first place concern these two countries'. This in itself does not seem to be a call for multilateralism but rather a call to create a bilateral agreement. However, the Schuman Declaration also proposed the creation of a High Authority to regulate the production of coal and steel, and extended the call to join this institution to 'the other countries of Europe' as a 'first step in the federation of Europe'. This High Authority would be managed by a number of 'independent persons appointed by the governments, giving equal representation', and by a chairman who would be chosen 'by common agreement between the governments'. It finally envisaged that the decisions of the High Authority would 'be enforceable in France, Germany and other member countries'. By committing to respect a common High Authority formed by nine individuals from the signing countries, which did not impose any sort of quotas based on size of the country or production of Coal and Steel (the only limitation was that the High Authority could not include 'more than two members having the nationality of the same state' (Treaty of Paris, Article 9)), signified a clear commitment to multilateralism by the 'bigger' states.

Although in recent times some commentators have claimed – and with good reason – that Germany has come to 'dominate' the EU, which has in turn led to a 'cultural dominance' of the Eurosceptic discourse in the rest of Europe (Beck, 2013), it would be hard to accept that the multilateral nature of the process of European integration has been replaced by an asymmetric relationship dominated by Germany (or any other state). Even after the Single European Act (SEA) began the process of replacing unanimity voting by a qualified majority voting system in the Council of the UE, the system remains clearly multilateral. The rules and distribution of the votes established in the Treaty of Nice (2001) – although to be changed by the Treaty of Lisbon from 2014 – may have ended unanimity voting for good but the system remains multilateral; 'with a qualified majority of over 70 per cent of the 237 votes, any three of the largest four [Germany, France, UK and Italy] could still block a decision' (Pinder, 2001: 38). Even two of the big four backed by one middle-sized country (Spain or Poland) and one of the smaller nations (Estonia, Slovenia, Latvia or Lithuania) could still block some decisions.

What is more, at the time Spain was seeking accession there was not a single country that, as arguably happens today, dominated the EEC politically or economically. Similarly, no single nation in Europe dominated Spanish trade in a similar way the United States dominated Mexican imports, exports and FDI during its transition to democracy. Although trade with the

EEC and then EU grew considerably, trade with Europe as a whole did not dominate Spanish trade in a similar way (figure 4.2). By 1985, the year before Spain's accession, the EEC of 12 was already Spain's biggest commercial partner, yet, according to Eurostat data, it only represented 52 per cent of total exports and 36.6 per cent of imports. These percentages grew in the next decade to 68.9 per cent exports (or 'dispatches' to be more accurate) and 63 per cent imports ('arrivals') in 1996. By 2005 these figures grew even more to 72.4 per cent and 64.2 per cent respectively, but this had probably more to do with the EU enlarging than with any significant change in trading patterns. At the same time, Spain has established fairly even trading relations with the major countries in Europe. The gap in the trade between Spain and its two biggest European partners (France and Germany) has never been significant (figure 4.2). Equally telling is the fact that the United States has also remained a major trading partner for Spain since the 1950s. Again, I understand that there is more to international relations than trade but, if we take these figures as an indicator, together with the institutional structure of the EU, it is clear to see that the process of European integration Spain embarked on was – and still is – a distinctly multilateral process.

It is clear, then, that the whilst the process of European integration has been dominated by multilateral strategies and dynamics, North American integration has been a 'dual bilateral' process which is politically and economically dominated by the United States. This is, to an extent, to be expected given the asymmetry between the three countries; but it was not unavoidable. What is more, this almost paranoid bilateralism has hindered the opportunities of democratic forces in Mexico to gain international support. As we will discuss in the next chapters (particularly the fifth and sixth), once it became clear the usual agents of democracy promotion in the United States (USAID, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and the main political parties) were not going to get involved with the democratisation of the country, Mexico's opposition parties and other democratic forces were left to their own devices. Although economic aid has always had something of a bad reputation in the United States (Miller and Stefanova, 2004: 513), this is hardly the case in Canada. Despite being one of the biggest contributors of international aid in the world, Canada has showed little interest in aiding Mexico's development. According to OECD figures, during the first years after NAFTA came into effect (1994-2000) Canada was one of the highest providers of aid in the world, providing more development aid (as percentage of GDP) during these years than the United States, France or the Netherlands, whilst only the UK, Spain, Japan and Germany outspent them (OECD Stats, 2013a). Yet Mexico received little help. This is hard to explain especially if we consider that even other Latin American countries with similar levels of development have actually received more aid than Mexico – last year (2012), for example, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) spent twice as much in aid programs in Brazil (\$3.66 million) and Colombia (\$3.27 million) as it did in Mexico (\$1.44 million) (CIDA, 2011-2012). In short, Canada has

shown little interest in getting involved in Mexico's social, economic or political development, which left the United States as the sole actor able to implement any leverage or provide any support.

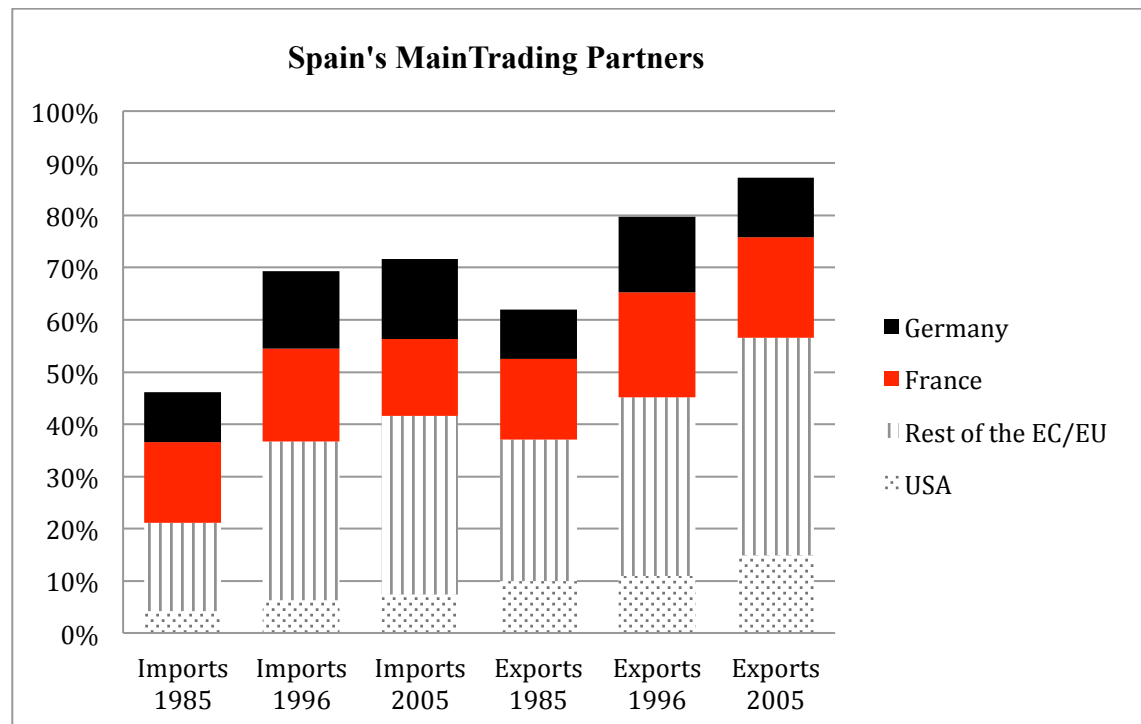


Figure 3.3. Share of total Spanish exports and imports in 1985, 1996 and 2005. With data from Eurostat (2011), and Buisán and Gordo (Banco de España) (1997).

In stark contrast, Spanish opposition forces, again as we will see in the fifth chapter, had a wide array of options and possibilities, and successfully managed to build support networks all over Europe. This meant that even at times when one or some of the member states cooled down their support for Spanish democracy or accession into Europe, there was always somewhere to turn to. When François Mitterrand unilaterally stopped negotiations over concerns with the CAP and access to fishing waters (Michalski, 2006: 284), for instance, Spain could still count with the enthusiastic support of West Germany – despite it being clear at that time that it would be the Germans who would have carry a large share of the financial burden of Spain's accession. A key German political objective had long been to strengthen the southern flank of NATO, whilst German businessmen were just as eager to gain unrestricted access to an increasingly competitive Spanish market (Tsoukalis, 1978: 441). What is more, whilst the PSOE, for example, benefited from links to other socialist parties in Germany and Sweden, the Spanish right under the banner of the newly reformed Partido Popular (PP) benefited from cooperation with other centre-right parties around Europe. The multilateral nature of the EU allowed many member states to get involved in supporting the emerging Spanish democracy. The 'dual bilateral' structure of NAFTA meant that once the United States decided not to get involved, Canada was only too happy to stand back as well. As such, Mexican democratic forces, despite

the increasing integration with two major democratic centres, were left with fewer resources from international democracy promotion actors than their Spanish counterparts.

In fewer words, then, NAFTA and the wider process of integration in Europe are very different, yet not so different that a comparison between the two becomes useless. Despite movements in Asia towards greater integration on trade issues, for example, the EU and NAFTA remain the only two trade regimes that 'represent coherent and formidable entities' (Pastor, 2011: 16). Although I would not go so far as agreeing with the notion that by 2001 North American integration had almost reached 'the levels of integration that Europe achieved after five decades' (*ibid*: 9), one cannot deny that between NAFTA's implementation in 1994 and the EU's enlargement of 2004, North America was the largest trade regime in territorial size, gross production and per capita GDP (*ibid*: 16). As we have seen though, this in itself does not mean that NAFTA and the EU share any organisational or institutional characteristics. In fact, as Robert Pastor rightly points out (2001: 9), any comparison between NAFTA and the EU should not originate from the assumption that Europe developed the ideal model for regional integration, but one should instead consider if 'there are elements of its experience that NAFTA could learn from, adapt and adopt'. In any case, the objective of this and the next chapters is not to develop a straightforward comparison between NAFTA and the EU but rather to assess how the differences between these two projects influenced the democratic transitions in Spain and Mexico. Having already analysed one of those key differences, i.e. the multilateral nature of the EEC and the 'dual bilateral' nature of NAFTA, it is time to turn our attention, first of all, to other key differences in the way the EEC/EU and NAFTA helped shape, rather than make, the Mexican and Spanish democracies.

3.2. A Note on institutional inertia and macrosocial change.

'Change is seen as the consequence (whether intended or unintended) of strategic action (whether intuitive or instrumental), filtered through perceptions (however informed or misinformed) of an institutional context that favours certain strategies, actors and perspective over others. Actors then appropriate a structured institutional context which favours certain strategies over others and they do so by way of strategies they formulate or intuitively adopt. Such strategies are, in turn, selected on the basis of an always partial knowledge of the structures (the institutional context) within which the actors find themselves and they anticipate the behaviour of others' (Hay and Wincott, 1998: 955-956).

Before moving on to the analysis of the more direct impact the North American and the European contexts may have had in Mexico and Spain's respective democracies, this thesis will develop a brief comparison between some institutional transformations. The reason is simple; as we have seen in the previous section, despite some similarities between NAFTA and the EU,

the differences are still considerable. Probably the biggest difference between the two projects is their respective level of institutionalisation; whilst the European project is characterised by a strong institutional framework that requires perspective members to embark in a wide-ranging process of institutional adaptation (Europeanisation), NAFTA is characterised by an extremely weak (not to say non-existent) institutional structure that, more often than not, makes cooperation and coordination between the three countries harder to achieve. Yet, despite this strong difference, as the rest of this chapter will show, NAFTA played some part in opening opportunities for institutional transformation, which is, as will be argued, no small feat.

First of all, we should bear in mind that institutional arrangements are by definition reluctant to change. This makes the analysis of the influence internationalisation projects may have in changing institutional arrangements even more important. With the probable exception of Diamond, Linz and Lipset's model, all of the theories of democratisation analysed in the second chapter attribute history a secondary role; modernisation, culturalist and even multicausal explanations of democracy tend to view history as a secondary factor that merely limits or influences political outcomes. However, following the influential work in economic institutions from Douglas North and other path-dependence scholars, a new type of historical institutionalism emerged in the 1980s and 1990s. In general terms, historical institutionalism shares many of the characteristics of path-dependence understood in its narrower sense, which, according to Paul Pierson, is very different from its broader understanding. In a broad sense path dependence is synonymous with the phrase 'history matters'; the process by which 'previous events in a sequence influence outcomes and trajectories but not necessarily by inducing further movement in the same direction' (2000: 252). Modernisation and culturalist explanations of democracy adhere to such a broad conception; history influences outcomes but in more or less unpredictable ways.

The narrower understanding of path-dependence though is what probably shapes historical institutionalism – which is according to Peter Hall and Rosemary Taylor, one of the 'three new institutionalisms' in political science (1996). This theory of political evolution is influenced by the idea of increasing returns. The process of increasing returns basically proposes that 'the probability of further steps along the same path increases with each move down that path'. This is simply because the further you go one path the cost of 'exit – of switching to some previously plausible alternative' (Pierson 2000: 252) increases exponentially².

² In statistical terms 'increasing returns' is explained by Polya's urn model; imagine an urn with an x number of white balls and a y number of black balls, then pick out one of those balls, observe what colour it is and put it back in the urn. From that information we could make certain assumptions of what will happen next time we repeat the dynamic. If we were to repeat this ten times we would get a certain distribution of black to white balls. If we repeat it another ten times we would probably get a different distribution, and then another ten times a different distribution, etcetera. In Polya's model however, every time a ball of a particular colour is drawn, that ball is put back in the urn *along with another ball of the*

Political institutions reinforce certain patterns of behaviour and dictate political outcomes. Mancur Olson's famous logic of collective action (1965) has already explained that overcoming the 'free rider' problem for new organisations can be extremely difficult if all the members are not receiving direct benefits (e.g. public interest groups). Hence, the cost of setting up new institutions or organisations – particularly those that look to influence the distribution of public goods (such as political parties or new levels of government) – tends to be very high. So, it could be inferred that 'whether you put energy into developing a new party, or join a potential coalition, or provide resources to an interest group may depend to a considerable degree on your confidence that a large number of other people will do the same' (Pierson, 2000: 258). Conversely, your expectation of other people 'doing the same' will in great measure depend on what you can predict others will do. These predictions, according to historical institutionalist advocates, are fundamentally based on the institutions that already exist. Whether one understands institutions as mere 'formal arrangements' or as broader 'culturalist' constructs is irrelevant to this basic dynamic. If institutions are understood from their strictly formal approach, they still allow individuals (as strategic maximisers) to predict to some degree of certainty 'the present and future behaviour of other actors' (Hall and Taylor, 1996: 940). This allows individuals to make decisions by reaching some sort of 'Nash equilibrium'. If one understands institutions as more than formal rules – i.e. considering the role of informal institutions in constraining behaviour 'by norms passed across generations through early socialisation' (Jackman and Miller, 1996: 635) – and sees individuals as more than strategic maximisers, then institutions provide a lesser degree of certainty when it comes down to predicting the behaviour of other actors. But one can still get 'strategically useful information' of how actors will behave based on the influence institutions have on their 'very identities, self-images and preferences' (*ibid*: 939). Thus, no matter how we define institutions, what is true is that they will have an impact on how individuals will behave when it comes down to creating new institutions or changing existing ones. This is, in essence, why widespread institutional change is very hard to achieve. Having said this though, historical institutionalists tend to reject the idea of rational actors being guided in their decision-making by mere maximising rationales (Hay and Wincott, 1998: 954). Either way, it is institutions that shape strategic actions from

same colour. We could then make different assumptions for the next time we draw a ball. In this model the contents of the urn are changing and there is a clear reinforcing dynamic. Probably the most common example of this dynamic at work comes from the QWERTY keyboard experience. This keyboard was initially designed, or so the folktale goes, to actually slow down typing since the very first typing machines were prone to jamming if many keys were hit in quick succession. To avoid this problem, an awkward key arrangement was developed. Once producers and consumers alike accepted this peculiar arrangement of keys, and even when modern computers that could process unimaginable amounts of data were being developed, the cost of changing to a more efficient keyboard would have been enormous. The way the QWERTY keyboard has survived is not that dissimilar to how many institutions have proved resilient to change.

certain actors, and it is this fact that confirms the reinforcing nature of historical institutionalism.

Obviously this vision of political development has many points of contention. Probably the most obvious one must be the limited importance it places on agency. Colin Hay and Daniel Wincott (1998) explain how, despite claiming to be somehow different from path-dependence theories, historical institutionalism still remains a structuralist theory that all but ignores the role of free agency. An extreme view of institutionalism does not allow for any deviance from the selected path. If, for some reason, actors behave in a way that seems contrary to what formal institutions would dictate, then it must be down to the cultural institutions that shape individuals' perceptions 'of what is feasible, legitimate, possible and desirable' (*ibid*: 957). Historical institutionalism seems to take Schumpeter's procedural definition of democracy to such an extreme that it ends up doing exactly what Schumpeter warned us against, i.e. 'ignoring the role of leadership'. After all, if the elites' actions can be predicted based on institutional (structural) incentives then there is no real leadership involved in that process. As we will see in the fifth chapter, however, actions taken by the key actors during the Mexican and Spanish transitions were of paramount importance and, what is more, actors in Spain and Mexico reacted differently to institutional contingencies.

On the other hand though, institutionalists from all dispositions tend to pay even less attention to the role society in general may play in political change. According to historical institutionalism, institutions not only dictate behaviour but also distribute economic and political power. Institutions allow and limit 'access to strategic resources, and indeed to knowledge of the institutional environment', which invariably leads to an uneven distribution of both resources and knowledge (Hay and Wincott, 1988: 955-956). Once this uneven redistribution is institutionalised it follows the same reinforcing dynamic as other institutions; the elites that enjoy access to resources and knowledge are the only ones who have a realistic opportunity to change the institutional arrangements that would distribute resources better. Obviously though, they lack the incentive to do so (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012: 83-87). This helps explain why consolidating democracy can be such a daunting project. As we will see in the cases of Spain and Mexico, arriving at a stage when non-democratic elites were willing to accept change was not easy. What is more, this is a very short window of opportunity that can close very quickly, and, as the increasing return principle explains, real democratic change relies heavily on the initial strategic decisions that are taken. A factor that needs to be considered in this very delicate balance of strategic calculations that explains why some actors reacted in a specific way (be it in favour or against democracy), is the international context. In other words, the influence of the international context on the elites' actions can be referred to as

what Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) call 'small differences', whilst transitions to democracy are what they would consider 'critical junctures'.

With this reinforcing dynamic in mind, let us briefly analyse two specific ways in which the international context played a part in transforming (or at least shaping) institutions in Spain and Mexico. Bearing in mind that the interaction between elites calculations and internationalisation during the transitions to democracy in Spain and Mexico will be analysed in detail in the fifth chapter, the cases to be analysed in this chapter (decentralisation and the political party system) will paint a more general picture of how the two projects of internationalisation influenced institutional changes. As just described, institutional change is not easy to achieve and the consequences of internationalisation can often be significant when the possible outcome is far from straightforward.

3.3 Shaping not making democracy: internationalisation and institutional change.

A main premise of this thesis is that much as Europe has historically been considered (as famously put by José Ortega y Gasset) the answer to the problem of Spain, Mexico's development since independence has been moulded by the clashing forces towards economic integration with the northern hegemon and the need to develop a nationalism of its own (Castañeda, 1988: 14).

This section, then, focuses on certain institutional transformations that, albeit not directly related to the process of democratisation itself, were, in varying degrees, transformed by Spain and Mexico's attempts to redefine their international roles. The fact that we are referring here to 'indirect influences' does not mean that these institutional transformations were less receptive to international pressures, or indeed any less important. In fact, we could say that the influence of internationalisation on specific institutional designs is, certainly in the case of Europe, the most obvious one. Although I will touch on other institutional transformations inherent in the process of internationalisation, I will begin my analysis with the decentralisation processes and the transformations in the political party systems in Spain and Mexico simply because most of these have been researched extensively elsewhere – the literature dealing with Europeanisation is particularly broad – and also because these only played an 'indirect' role in shaping (rather than making) the democracies of our case studies. Again, what I mean here by 'indirect' is not a synonym for 'accidental'; the dynamics to be analysed may be indirectly related to the transition process itself but, as I have said before, these can make some real differences in the quality of the resulting democracy. In any case, briefly analysing these variables will help us set the tone for the rest of the thesis, help illustrate the point made before about how the international context can influence the delicately poised conditions that usually accompany institutional

change, as well as further reinforce the main point of this thesis – that in cases like Mexico and Spain, where projects of regional integration have overlapped with democratisation processes, we have to consider the role internationalisation played in shaping the outcome of the transition.

3.3.1 Decentralising power

As I said before, Europeanisation could be understood as the process of institutional adaptation (or convergence) inherent in European membership. Europeanisation, it is fair to say, is different from any other internationalisation project or indeed relationship of interdependence, simply because it formalises these relationships in institutional arrangements (Closa, 2001: 6). In the case of Mexico, of course, we cannot speak of a similar process simply because NAFTA did not require the creation of any formal institutions or, indeed, the explicit transformation of the existing ones. This is not to say, however, that certain institutional and systemic transformations did not occur as an indirect consequence of internationalisation; it does mean, however, that a correlation is harder to establish. The next few pages will, then, briefly analyse how these institutional transformations were, in some cases subtler than in others, influenced by regional integration.

A good place to start is a brief analysis of how the new Spanish regional arrangement – following democratisation – has had an impact on the ‘reformulation’ of the Spanish state, as well as the way policies and institutions emanating from the EU have influenced this ‘reformulation’ (Börzel, 2000 and 2002; Montero, 2001). These developments can be compared to the seemingly ‘chaotic’ process of decentralisation that took place in Mexico as the PRI regime continuously weakened (Aguayo Quezada, 2010a: 241-244; Guillén López, 2010; Peschard, 2010; Tuckman 2012: 52-83), and the part that the signing and implementation of NAFTA may have played in initialising this process. The main argument is that, considering the weak institutionalisation of the State of the Autonomies in Spain, the EU played an important role in stabilising or normalising the relationship between Madrid and the Autonomies (Börzel, 2000 and 2002). On the other hand, the process of economic integration with North America contributed towards greater regional inequality within Mexico – the poorly developed road network in Mexico has hindered the chances of the southern states to seriously benefit from free trade with the United States – thus contributing towards the emergence of some *caciquismos*. More importantly though, whilst the EU has created an incentive for the Spanish Autonomies to cooperate with each other and with the central government, NAFTA contributed towards a shrinking of Mexico’s central state that although signified a loss of control over territory (alternation in power at state and municipal level intensified in the late 1980s and early 1990s) did not necessarily contribute towards the democratisation of government at state and municipal levels, or towards improving the interaction between the different levels of government. In

essence, during the early stages of the transition, gubernatorial and municipal level appointments were used as tokens to negotiate political gains. The gubernatorial race for the government of Guanajuato in 1991, for instance, ended with an electoral victory for the PRI candidate – Ramón Aguirre Velázquez – but after a campaign of contestations and mobilisation orchestrated by the PAN's defeated candidate – Vicente Fox – Guanajuato's governorship eventually went to the PAN (although not to Fox). This was clearly the product of a backroom arrangement rather than an actual electoral process (Peschard, 2010: 71-72). Victories at state and municipal level also served as political capital during negotiations at the federal level, which was the real arena where the political forces battled for access to power. This led to a stronger institutional democracy at a federal level but a considerably weaker one at the local level.

In authoritarian regimes power is, by definition, heavily centralised, which leads to local and regional governments becoming mere symbols of the regime without any actual power. As democratisation progresses, power becomes decentralised and returns to the local and regional levels. In the case of Mexico, municipal and state governments remained firmly under the control of the PRI's strict vertical structure. Before the PAN's electoral triumph in three municipal elections in Chihuahua (Ojinaga, Julimes and Belisario Domínguez) in 1974, there had been only two opposition governments at any level: the case of the *Unión Cívica Leonesa* (UCL) in Guanajuato 1945 and then the '*Navista*' movement in San Luis Potosí 1959³. What is more, in Mexico the centralisation of power was exacerbated by an exaggerated presidentialism that portrayed the head of state as an omnipotent yet accessible figure that was responsible for fixing even the smallest of problems. This carefully crafted idea of a sympathetic and powerful president, willing to fix even the smallest of problems, encouraged the average citizen to aim their petitions as high as possible, thus completely bypassing local governments and rendering them useless (Craig and Cornelius, 1980: 351-353). NAFTA played a somewhat indirect role in changing this dynamic. By allowing some localities to gain access to resources outside of the federal government's control, and thus helping minimise the damage of having a non-PRI

³ The case of the UCL is particularly interesting due to its incredible success. Although not without success of its own, Salvador Nava's challenge of the PRI structures was more about a PRI member challenging the local *cacique*. Once Nava 'broke the rules of the system' and tried to challenge for the state government – buoyed by his success at the municipal level – his movement was swiftly repressed (Ortega Ortiz, 2008: 163). On the other hand, President Ávila Camacho accepted the victory of UCL's candidate, Carlos Obregón, in the local elections of León Guanajuato after widespread repression – 27 murders and more than 60 injured in the days following the fraudulent December 1945 elections (*ibid*: 161) – and what effectively constituted a suspension of power at state level failed to demobilise civil unrest. What is more, the United States government reacted negatively to the developments in Guanajuato; the then United States ambassador to Mexico reported back to the State Department on the negative effects electoral fraud and subsequent repression could have as a destabilising influence in the still unconsolidated Mexican regime. Even the FBI launched its own investigation over the episode, concluding that the Mexican Army had acted to quash a post-electoral struggle (Loaeza, 2013). However, the UCL never managed to build on its victory and once Obregón's term was over, the government disbanded the organisation and comfortably regained the municipal government (Ortega Ortiz, 2008: 161).

government, NAFTA contributed towards the alternation in power at local level. From the mid 1980s and the early 1990s, for instance, Mexico's cities near the United States border started to take a more active role in the environmental issues affecting this region. Since NAFTA's implementation there has been a surge of programmes managed by border localities thanks to North American Development Bank (NADB) and the Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC). The NADB and the BECC are the only development institutions emerging from NAFTA and their mission is to 'address environmental issues on the US-Mexico border' (NADB website); as such, they provide 'financial assistance to public and private entities involved in developing environmental infrastructure projects in the border region' (*ibid*). To date the NADB has provided over \$1.22 billion in loans for projects in the border region and 95 of the 177 projects funded have been on the Mexican side of the border. This allowed border cities to access resources from the NADB and not depend entirely on the federal government to fund projects. However, the impact of NADB and BECC projects remains marginal and these are, for the most part, rather unknown organisations on both sides of the border.

During the negotiation stages of NAFTA and the debate over its benefits in the United States, the Salinas administration and other business interests reportedly spent at least \$30 million on what was described by the Center for Public Integrity (2006, 16) – an independent think tank – as the 'largest foreign lobbying campaign in [United States] history'. The Mexican Diaspora was identified as a useful asset in the PRI's PR campaign and the Home Town Associations (HTAs) were developed to try to get them involved (Ayón, 2010). The idea was to engage the Mexican community in the United States whilst keeping them away from criticising the regime. The best way to achieve this was by getting them involved in localised projects. The Salinas administration conjured the two-for-one plan in which the federal government matched donations from the Diaspora to their communities back in Mexico. This also allowed some municipal governments to access resources outside the federal patronage. As remittances from Mexican immigrants in the United States surpassed oil as the number one source of dollars in the country, it became clear that the effort to get the Diaspora involved in local affairs had worked. This helped raise the profile of some state and municipal governments, which have gone since the transition to democracy, 'from a subordinate role to one of increasing political autonomy' (Guillén López, 2010: 189). Nevertheless, although NAFTA gave the opportunity to some local governments to access resources outside the PRI's patronage, these were concentrated in a handful of northern localities and in the states with a high number of emigrants (e.g. Guanajuato, Jalisco, Michoacán and Hidalgo).

Finally, although not a direct effect of NAFTA but certainly a consequence of Mexico's increasing receptiveness to foreign trends, there is an argument to be made about the influence

the ideas of the New Public Management school had in Mexico's process of decentralisation. As Mexico's internationalisation project advanced and as the state kept getting smaller, the new Mexican policy-makers (as we will see in the fifth chapter, mostly educated in the United States) and technocrats joined the zeitgeist of the time. Almost overnight, governance and efficiency in policy implementation became relevant, whilst much of the focus was on decentralisation of power and policy innovation at local level. In 2001, the Ford Foundation – in cooperation with the *Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas* – awarded five different municipalities in Mexico the *Premio de Gobierno y Gestión Local* worth \$250,000 Mexican Pesos each (around \$27,000 dollars at the time), in recognition of their contribution towards the institutionalisation of good governance at municipal level, as well as the promotion and development of better democratic practices (*Premio Municipal* website). The Ash Centre for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University had, also funded by the Ford Foundation, established a very similar award in the United States – the Innovations in American Government Award – in the mid 1980s with the objective of incentivising the development of innovations at subnational level (although this changed in 1995) (Ash Center's website). Similar awards and organisations – all closely linked to the principle of efficiency in policy making and implementation – also started to emerge in other Latin American countries around the same time (such as Peru's 'Participation and Local management Program' and the 'Public Management and Citizenship Program' in Brazil). The emergence of such awards in Mexico evidences an involvement in the transnational trends of the time, but is also evidence of, at the very least, the increasing attention that was being paid to local governments in Mexico.

Despite this focus and effort to promote decentralisation, it is no longer clear if the rise in power at state and local levels was actually a positive development for Mexico's democracy. Sergio Aguayo Quezada (2010a: 191-197) argues that as Mexico's governors now control so many resources outside the scope of federal control, they can be real players in the federal elections and, more often than not, they tend to abuse this power. The notion that the PRI losing control of increasing parts of the country could only be positive for democracy is no longer an undisputed fact. The uneven evolution of decentralisation in Mexico has on the one hand led to an increase in the relevance of the state governments by increasing the amount of resources they control, but on the other hand has not completely eliminated the clear dependence politicians have on the centre (be it the presidency or the central authority of the party) to advance their political careers (Montero, 2001b: 49-50). So whilst many political leaders now see governorships as an important step, the fact that there is a strict no re-election rule for these posts means that governors are still dependent on the presidency or the leadership of their parties (all three main parties remain heavily centralised) to advance their political careers. What all this means is that, similarly to Spain's process of informal redesign of its State of the Autonomies, Mexico's transformation to a real federalist state is a process 'guided more by

informal negotiations among key actors than by any clear roadmap or desired outcome' (Guillén López, 2010: 188). Unlike Spain, however, this chaotic process has contributed toward the survival of pockets of authoritarianism inside Mexico.

This uneven decentralisation, was accelerated by the need to reduce the size of the central state if Mexico was to complete its economic internationalisation, has had negative repercussions for Mexico's democracy. The fact is that whilst opposition forces were consumed by their priority of changing the electoral rules at national level, the electoral rules at state level have not moved at the same direction (Peschard, 2010: 68-69). Some states, particularly those which political parties felt were their 'strongholds' (such as the PAN in Jalisco or the *Partido de la Revolución Democrática* (PRD) in Mexico City), introduced important electoral reforms as they sought to gain political legitimacy without risking losing the power which state governorships now gave them (*ibid*: 78). Yet many other states have not undergone widespread electoral reform. This duality in the democratic evolution has had serious consequences for Mexican democracy overall. In those states where democracy has not made the same inroads (such as Guerrero, Chiapas, Mexico State and Tamaulipas) (*Índice de Desarrollo Democrático de México*, 2012), citizens tend to have a more negative view of the whole system and are far more disengaged (Hiskey and Bowler, 2005). Since they do not interact with democratic institutions on a daily basis, the development of a democratic political culture in these states is unlikely. An authoritarian local environment potentially undermines 'any impact positive national-level changes may have had on levels of system support in democracy' (*ibid*: 58). In other words, as long as democracy does not advance from the national to the local, authoritarian experiences at local level will have an impact on democracy at the national level.

Even more so than in Mexico, the transition to democracy in Spain had huge repercussions for the way the state was organised. A strong central and undividable Spanish state was one of the main tenets of Francoism. Once the regime was dismantled, there was a need to redesign the state in order to accommodate the many grievances of the regions, which was by no means a straightforward endeavour. Tanja Börzel (2002) describes how the Europeanisation of policymaking in Spain contributed to the strengthening of a dual federalist model over intergovernmental competition in the State of the Autonomies. Unlike most federal states (but similar to Mexico), the weakly institutionalised nature of Spain's regionalisation (or 'open-endedness') had encouraged competitive bargaining between the central government and the different Autonomous Communities, and among the Autonomous Communities themselves (Colomer, 1998: 40; Montero, 2001a:152-159). Unlike in Mexico – where contrary to most 'third wave' democracies 'subnational processes of political opening preceded the arrival of democracy at national level' (Hiskey and Bowler, 2005: 58) – in Spain the devolution of power was effectively initiated only after the transition was achieved at national level; thus although

decentralisation and democratisation advanced at roughly the same time, the local/regional arena was not a ground where democratic improvements were being gained or lost (Encarnación, 2008: 102-103). In short, if judged exclusively 'by the degree to which the state has been decentralised', it would be 'easy to declare that Spain's *autonomías* system [has been] a success' (*ibid*: 105).

Yet there is a negative dimension to this process too. Whilst in Mexico decentralisation opened opportunities for non-democratic forces (*caciquismos*) to hold on to the power structures of the old regime, in Spain decentralisation opened similar opportunities for regionalist parties to further advance their projects of autonomy (*ibid*: 107). The few institutions that were supposed to promote cooperation or mediate between the regions that emerged during the transition, were not actually designed to function as a federal state; the arrangement in the 1978 Constitution is the result of a process of 'rational choice' within the 'framework of consensus' (Balfour and Quiroga, 2007: 48), which partly explains the weak institutionalisation of the State of the Autonomies. The Constitutional Court, for instance, can be an arbiter between the centre and the regions but only on issues limited to the actual legality of proceedings, whilst the Senate was not designed to be a chamber of territorial representation as such, but was rather conceived as an easy way to 'give some Francoist politicians a chance to retain parliamentary seats' (Colomer, 1998: 49). Thus despite Spain technically not being a federal state, the amount spent by the central government as a percentage of GDP between 1995 and 2008 averaged only 18.74 per cent – only marginally higher than Germany's 14.25 and the second lowest level in all of Europe (Eurostat, 2013). Despite regional and local governments clearly controlling a huge percentage of overall total spending, Spain does not have the sort of institutional arrangements that facilitate cooperation, negotiation and coordination. Just as happened in Mexico, decentralisation has been more about pacts and ad hoc negotiations than actual institutional evolutions.

European membership, however, somehow contributed to improving the structures of cooperation between the different levels of government. As policy competencies are transferred to the EU, the distribution of resources between the Spanish central state and the regions is essentially transformed, 'thereby increasing the mutual interdependence between the two levels of government' (Börzel, 2002: 18). Although this may not seem to have had a direct effect on democratisation, the Europeanisation of policy implementation has helped the Spanish State of the Autonomies develop a more functional decentralised political system. Besides the obvious benefit of facilitating good governance – a particularly important factor if the sort of disenchantment with democracy that can threaten the regime is to be avoided – in Spain an effective distribution of power strengthened democracy not only by bringing local independent institutions closer to the citizenry, but also by facilitating the access to power to individuals and

political forces not linked to the regime or the traditional opposition (Powell, 2001: 240). What is more, by offering a new structure of political opportunities to the regions (i.e. access to resources bypassing the central state), the EU has helped correct an imbalance that existed in the Spanish Constitution of 1978. Decentralisation was considered a contentious issue during the Constitution's negotiations as the Francoists regarded the integrity of the Spanish state as a *sin qua non* for participating in the transition; conversely the historical nationalities (primarily the Basque Country, Catalonia and Galicia) had suffered the most under Franco's repression and were eager to gain some sort of autonomy. Hence, decentralisation was only half-heartedly negotiated and resulted in a very loose institutional framework that rewarded competitive politics over cooperation (Field and Hamann, 2008: 16). Although initially membership with the Community opened 'lobbying opportunities' to the regional governments and provided a clear incentive for the regional governments to 'expand their command over economic policy' (Montero, 2001a: 150), cooperation amongst the regions and between the regions and the State soon increased as it became evident agreements had to be reached in order to access European funds and influence; thus cooperation over European issues has been far more common than over any other strictly domestic issue (Börzel, 2000). Unlike the Mexican case, then, the negative consequences of an uneven and almost impromptu process of decentralisation in Spain – although still far from perfect – were ameliorated by the necessity to cooperate at least on European issues.

3.3.2 Political parties, party system and foreign policy

There is also evidence that suggests Europe had a 'normalising' effect in the Spanish system of political parties as a whole, and on the Partido Popular in particular (Román Marugán, 2001). The transformation of the Spanish political party system is the perfect example of how the process of European political and social integration indirectly helped transform a part of the political system, specific institutions and the political culture of a country. It is clear that 'since the democratisation of the Spanish system, the right has undergone a series of rapid ideological and organisational changes' (Llamazares, 2005: 315), and evidence suggests that an important facilitator for these changes has been the process of European integration. The framework of institutional Europe was the perfect space for manifestations of the ideological and political redefinition of the Spanish right. One of the most striking effects of the Europeanisation of the PP was its embrace of neo-liberal economic models and the abandonment of 'the ambiguous attitudes towards markets and capitalism that historically characterised Spanish conservatism' (*ibid*: 322). While democratisation almost always leads to a centripetal tendency amongst political parties, in the case of the Spanish right, European politics became a core element in its ideological, organisational, and structural transformation. The success of the political right in moving towards the centre following Aznar's centralisation of the old Alianza Popular (AP)

under the new PP structure in 1989 was extraordinary. The destitution of Manuel Fraga as leader of the party symbolised a 'staged' break with Francoism. In what is usually perceived as an electoral strategy to appeal to a larger portion of the population, the PP joined the European's People Party (EPP) in 1989 and fully adopted the traditional centre-right, moderate view that characterises the European Christian Democratic parties. At the same time, the EPP's self-positioning as part of 'the political family of the centre-right' with roots that 'run deep in the history and civilization of the European continent' (EPP website), provided the PP with an opportunity to enter fully into the European debate whilst continuing its ideological path towards the centre.

Up until that point, the Spanish right had been more focused on internal scuffles than on European integration. Although never openly against EU membership, the AP tended to have a very critical approach towards any UCD or PSOE policies regarding Europe. By changing its position on European integration and ending its European ostracism, the PP not only transformed itself ideologically but also presented a credible centre-right alternative to the Spanish electorate. The emergence of a credible opposition to the PSOE sparked political competition and a serious debate over European policy. What is more, Spaniards began to define themselves on more traditional left/right political orientations. According to data from the WVS, whilst in 1981 more than 30 per cent of the population could not place themselves anywhere in the political spectrum and only 17 per cent declared themselves to be centrists; by 1990 almost 25 per cent of the population considered themselves to be centrists (raised to 28 per cent in 1995), and the respondents who placed themselves in the centre-right of the spectrum accounted for 22 per cent of the total (an increase of more than 3 per cent from 1981).

The other parties, however, were by no means exempt from a moderating European influence. European integration was, as we will see in the next chapters, a common goal for virtually every political party. As the parties prepared for the first democratic elections in 1977, the debate was not whether Spain should join Europe, but rather which party offered the best strategy to achieve this. All the main parties (PSOE, *Partido Comunista Español* (PCE), AP and UCD) looked for foreign (mainly European but in the case of AP also from the United States) endorsements; the PSOE brought leaders from abroad, Carrillo made public appearances with other prominent Eurocommunist leaders such as the Italian Enrico Berlinguer and the leader of the French Communists Georges Marchais, whilst Federico Silva – one of the founding members of the AP – was sent to Munich by his party to meet the German Christian Democrat Franz Strauss (Edles, 1998: 57). This obsession with seeking approval from other European main parties helped to moderate the positions of the political parties themselves – no mainstream European party would have lent their support to radical or anti-democratic groups in Spain – but also contributed towards the eventual 'approval' of the European Parliament of the

Spanish process of democratisation, which was so important in legitimising the transition (*ibid*: 58).

The transformation of the PSOE into a party capable of governing also stands out (Ortega Ortiz, 2008: 152-155). In order to understand how and why the PSOE had to change, we have to consider that the memory of the Civil War was a strong conditioning factor in the transition to democracy (Aguilar, 1997 and 2000: 303). There is a certain degree of consensus around the idea that the transition to democracy in Spain was a relatively peaceful process, because a sentiment of 'never again' prevailed amongst the population (Varela Ortega, 2000: 152-155). It was in this atmosphere of 'conciliation over confrontation' that the PSOE and the PCE had to enter the electoral arena. As we will see in the fifth chapter, even with different strategies, both the PSOE and the PCE had been the historical oppositions to the regime, and many of their members and activists had personally endured Franco's repression. Trying to appeal to a majority of centrist voters without alienating their base was a balancing act for both parties. Whilst the Communist, under Santiago Carrillo tried to appeal to the general population by finally renouncing Leninism and joining the Eurocommunist movement, the PSOE, under the leadership of Felipe González, used its links with European social democratic parties (Germany's SPD and Sweden's Social Democrats) to boost their democratic credentials (Ortega Ortiz, 2008: 135). As we will see in detail in the fifth chapter, whilst the PSOE represented the external opposition, it was the PCE who took a 'hands-on' approach to opposing the regime. Although a laudable approach, this meant that, when the transition arrived, the PCE was still regarded by most Spaniards as an anti-systemic party that could destabilise the whole democratic process. Considering the events surrounding the 1981 attempted coup, one could argue that the Spanish electorate was not far off the mark; if the PCE had done better in the 1979 election (the PCE got a mere 10 per cent of the vote), it is hard to predict how the armed forces would have reacted. Despite the PCE's best efforts – unlike its Greek and Portuguese counterparts the PCE declared itself solidly pro-European (following economic, political and geopolitical considerations) since it was legalised in 1977 (Alvarez-Miranda Navarro, 1994: 163) – they could not rely on the recognition in Europe that the PSOE had, which was so helpful in convincing the electorate they were prepared to govern. But we should still not underestimate the stabilising and depolarising effect EEC membership had on the PCE, and on the wider Spanish political party system; in Spain, unlike Greece and Portugal for instance, by the time of the first democratic elections on 1977 all three main parties could be considered to be pro-European and not one was anti-systemic (*ibid*: 166).

In Mexico the reformulation of the political party system (and the parties themselves) is probably a more important feature than for Spanish democracy. After all, as is said repeatedly, the architecture of the Mexican transition has been designed by the struggles between political

parties in the arena of electoral institutions. A big part of the PRI's success was owed to its ability to institutionalise a subsystem of political parties that took part in its non-competitive elections (Prud'homme, 1994: 31). Transforming this system was always going to be a priority. This explains why the IFE is such a respected institution (as said in the first chapter, the IFE advisors helped design the new electoral institutions in Iraq). Yet the IFE and the electoral tribunal still 'rely on the good will of the parties themselves' (Prud'homme, 2010: 53). Despite the efforts that have been made to de-politicise the electoral institutions, the political parties remain firmly in control; not only do they choose the rules of the game they are playing, but they also choose the rewards and the resources available. Unsurprisingly then, with the exception of the post-2006 electoral challenge, since 1996 political parties have shied away from pushing electoral reform; they all believe they can still benefit from the prevailing conditions, thus the status quo is maintained (*ibid*: 53). Although the 1996 electoral reform completely transformed the political landscape by radically increasing the capabilities of opposition parties, it did so by granting them huge access to public resources. The public money spent by political parties in 2000 (over 3.3 billion Mexican Pesos) was more than five times higher than in 1997 (639 million Pesos) (Aguayo Quezada, 2010a: 132) – and we are talking here only of official figures. In a country where corruption is rampant, the political parties are not keen on self-regulation and had become the 'brat children' of the transition; the reported spending of over 150 million Pesos of public money in the last ten years seems to fall short of the real amount (*ibid*: 235).

Despite the obvious need to restructure the party system, there is no evidence that suggests the international context, and the United States in particular, supported in any way the opposition parties during the transition or, indeed, the redesign of the electoral laws after the transition. What is again striking about this lack of engagement, is that the United States (through USAID and the NED) has not shied away from supporting democratic opposition parties or financing institutional transformations elsewhere. Drawing on the precedent of the German political parties who, as just mentioned, have long provided aid to their counterparts in democratising countries (Pangle, 2009: 6), NED and USAID took an increasingly active role in supporting democracy through political assistance (*ibid*: 7) in democratising countries. According to one estimate (Finkel *et al.*, 2008: 83), USAID invested over \$50 million in ten years supporting Democracy and Governance⁴ in Mexico, which would, according to that same study, translate into an improvement of roughly 1.2 points in Freedom House's general democracy index (Finkel *et al.* 2006: 83). Although these figures are significant, we should consider that Colombia received over US\$100 million from the same organisation in roughly the same time (Finkel *et al.*, 2008: 70), whilst Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Haiti, El Salvador and

⁴ I.e. supporting elections, civil society, independent media, the rule of law and more transparent and accountable governance (USAID – Democracy, Human Rights and Governance Office website).

Guatemala in the Western Hemisphere, and countries like South Africa, Indonesia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Serbia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Poland and Romania in other regions all received more aid from USAID than Mexico did in roughly the same time period (*ibid*). What is more, the total amount invested by the United States in democracy promotion 'remains a relatively small proportion of total U.S. development assistance, which in turn is a relatively small portion of its GNP when compared to almost all other advanced industrial democracies' (Finkel *et al.*, 2008: 83). In short, it would be fair to say, whatever aid Mexico received from the United States in this instance was far from overwhelming.

Yet, probably more important than financial support, Mexican opposition parties did not enjoy the sort of backing from their counterparts in the United States as Spanish parties did from theirs in Europe. Although this is mere speculation, it would be fair to assume that a more proactive approach from, say, the Democratic Party may have helped the PRD consolidate its position as a 'responsible left', and thus avoid the democratic 'semiloyalty' that has at times characterised it – such as the period following the 2006 elections, when despite being the second biggest party in Congress and governing Mexico City, the PRD found itself weakening the very same democratic institutions it had fought for and being a quasi anti-systemic party (Silva-Herzog Márquez, 2010: 305). James McCann's analysis (2009) of the attitudes of Mexican voters to foreign leaders, for instance, indicates that the views of the electorate towards specific foreign leaders (e.g. Bush and Chávez) can help us classify individual voters along the left-right ideological spectrum. Although this obviously does not mean that foreign leaders have an actual impact in shaping ideological orientations in Mexico, it does indicate that the Mexican electorate is well aware of foreign developments. Although it is hard to know what impact, if any, José María Aznar's 'interference' in the 2006 electoral process (when he publicly praised the PAN and compared López Obrador with Hugo Chávez) may have had on the outcome (*ibid*: 269), there is no doubt that, at least, the public were aware of Aznar's standing and what he represented. Similar signs of support from established democratic parties in the United States and Canada towards opposition parties in Mexico would have certainly not gone unnoticed – particularly at a stage when the very same process of internationalisation had contributed to the weakening of the PRI.

As a final consideration of the influence integration into Europe had on the institutional front, it is worth mentioning the significant changes in Spanish foreign policy. Clearly as Spanish ostracism was coming to an end, its foreign policy was bound to change in order to adapt to the new realities of democratic life. However, there is evidence that suggests that Europe may again have played a role in this process. The right's traditional foreign policy view changed radically as the PP joined the EPP; it went from 'inwards' nationalism towards a more mainstream European view of 'outward-looking' nationalism (Varela Ortega, 2000). Clear evidence of this

new vision of the PP's foreign policy outlook came when the Aznar government decided to support the United States led invasion of Iraq. Ironically, it was a decision that alienated Aznar from the European 'core', but it would not have happened under traditional Spanish right wing foreign policy principles. The 'Europeanisation' of Spanish foreign policy can also be seen as a simultaneous process of logical 'convergence' of interests with its European neighbours, and a process of 'transfer of problems' from the national to the EU level occurs (Torreblanca, 2001). Whilst North America, on the other hand, faces similar foreign and security challenges (drug trafficking, migration flows, a porous borders, etcetera) no real convergence or cooperation at the higher level has taken place other than the Mérida Initiative. Although an important step, of the \$400 million that the United States invested in the Initiative in 2008, about one third was destined towards strengthening judicial institutions or the rule of law (Benítez Manaut, 2009: 231-233), whilst the vast majority went towards military/law enforcement spending. Albeit no weaponry is included in the Initiative, the funds are being used mainly for surveillance equipment and intelligence operations in the fight against drug cartels; since the military has taken over this responsibility, we could consider the majority of the funds available from the Mérida Initiative as military aid. If we then consider that the United States granted almost 2.4 billion to Israel and nearly \$1.9 billion to Egypt in military financing in the same year (Sharp, 2010: 4-6), then we can get a clear idea of how high of a security priority the southern border is for the United States.

3.3. Conclusions

The first part of the chapter dealt with the very obvious differences between the process of European integration and that of North America. I also, however, presented some key similarities that, albeit far from obvious, help us understand why Spain joining the EEC and Mexico signing NAFTA were similar processes that might have influenced their respective transitions to democracy in a similar way. The argument that NAFTA and the EU are simply too different to be compared denotes, to an extent, a very one-dimensional understanding of both projects. Certainly North America is not Europe, and as such cannot follow the same integration paradigm. Yet there are many similarities that not only justify a comparison, but that also indicate that there are lessons to be learned from the European experience. There is little doubt that in Europe, 'national political systems have become porous as bureaucracies, interests groups and even political parties have established transnational linkages and direct their activities toward EU institutions' (Vega-Cánovas, 1999: 226). Whilst, in stark contrast, the integration process in North America has been characterized by 'lower levels of negative, or market integration, with a minimum of shared institutions' (*ibid*: 228). I insist, the fact that there may certainly be some lessons that can be learned from the process of European integration does not mean that it is a process that is likely to be replicated elsewhere. The objective of this

thesis, however, is not to offer a direct comparison between the two processes of integration and neither is it to propose that North America will (or even should) follow the European path. The objective of the description of the two processes of integration was to show the similarities between the ways Spain and Mexico internationalised. In particular how, despite the differences in the original objectives of both processes of integration, the EEC that Spain applied to join in 1977 was not entirely dissimilar to what NAFTA has been since its conception.

The second part of the chapter focused on one of those highly relevant differences between the two processes, which is key to explaining why European integration was a far more relevant factor in Spain's democratisation than NAFTA ever was in Mexico's. The dual-bilateral nature of NAFTA very much implied that it was, in essence, a treaty between the United States and Mexico. By failing to develop the third leg of the triangle, Mexico and Canada did not substantially increase interdependence or even cooperation. Despite Canada and Mexico sharing some strategic considerations in North America, as well as sharing the same goal of avoiding outright American dominance in the region – both having been direct sufferers from American expansionism and defining their own brand of 'exceptionalism' against the backdrop of American influence (Inglehart *et al.*, 1996: 13; Taylor, 2001: 26), the linkage between the two was not truly raised by the agreement. Despite the signing of NAFTA serving as a 'catalyst for steady growth in ties between Canada and Mexico', there is no doubt those in Canada that hold the view that 'the nation should distance itself from Mexico and trilateralism in order to focus more fully on its relationship with the United States' have prevailed (Green and Graham, 2012: 1-3). This view was summarised back in 2008 by Diane Francis, a prominent centre-right commentator in Canada:

'The problem is Mexico ... Three-way trade has been beneficial for all concerned. But Canada's relationship with the U.S. should be decoupled from Mexico's so that the two rich neighbours can take the next important step, which is to form a customs union. This would be mutually beneficial, but is not happening because Mexico is not ready for this due to poor governance and deep socio-economic impediments' (*Financial Post* 4/3/2008).

Since there was, thus, no real increase in the linkage between the two, there was really no increase in the leverage potential Canada could apply to Mexico to democratise, nor was there really any desire to develop it. This is in complete contrast to how the process of European integration works. The asymmetry that characterises NAFTA may explain why further integration between the United States and Mexico was unlikely, but it does not explain why these two countries became far more integrated than Mexico and Canada. Geography may explain this in part but it is only half the story. Spain managed to develop an internationalisation project that did not depend on the strategies of a single government. The multilateral dynamics

of the EEC allowed Spain to look for allies in different places at different times. Even when Mitterrand's government decided to unilaterally stop negotiations, Spain could always count on support from Germany and other European countries. The multiple centres of power around Europe, as we will see in the next chapters, intervened in the process of democratisation at different stages. Mexico's democratic forces, on the other hand, depended solely on the United States for international support. When it became clear that the United States had no interest in supporting the emergence of a democratic regime in Mexico, the opposition forces were very much left without any viable source of foreign support.

Finally, this chapter presented, following a methodological note on institutional transformations overall, an analysis of two institutional adaptations influenced by Mexico and Spain's internationalisations, and which had an indirect influence on the shape of the democratic regimes of both countries. While decentralisation is not a necessary condition for democratisation, when this does take place it is important to minimise the possible conflicts that may emerge from it (such as the emergence of new political alliances that disrupt the fine balance of new democracies, a possible loss of control over spending and an increase in public debt (Montero, 2001a: 163)). As said before, when poorly carried out, decentralisation can create further problems for the new democratic regimes at a time when they can ill-afford to be perceived as incapable of governing efficiently. The EEC/EU partly and indirectly helped the Autonomous Communities and Madrid find common ground for cooperation. NAFTA and the wider context of internationalisation, on the other hand, did play a part in accelerating the process of decentralisation of power in Mexico but did not contribute towards facilitating the changed interaction between the different levels of government. At the same time, whilst increasing liberalisation was opening new opportunities to the opposition parties in Mexico, pro-democracy forces in the United States and Canada – albeit Canada has, as said before, long ignored developments in Mexico – failed to support them. On the other hand, the EU worked as a platform from which the AP/PP could redefine itself as a responsible centre-right party and it contributed towards the overall moderation of the political party system, whilst individual European parties and their leaders took an active role in supporting their respective counterparts in Spain.

CHAPTER IV. Internationalisation, Modernisation and Democracy in Spain and Mexico

Modernisation theory, its variations and its place in the democratisation literature have already been briefly discussed in the second chapter, but there is a need to analyse it in further detail. After all, modernisation theory – the supposed correlation between development and democracy – has undoubtedly tended to dominate the debate on democratisation. Before going into the specific relationship between development, structural contingencies and democratisation processes, let us first briefly review the main tenets of modernisation theory and how it relates to our projects of internationalisation. As said in the second chapter, classic modernisation theory (Durkheim, 1933 [1997]; Lerner, 1958; Schumpeter, 1942 [2011]: 296-297; Weber, 1905 [2003]) is not necessarily concerned with explaining democratisation. Rather the earlier versions of modernisation are more of ‘a conception in which society, economy and polity are systemically interrelated, integrated by an overriding value consensus, and subject to increasing specification and differentiation of social structures’ (Huber *et al.*, 1993: 71). In fewer words, modernisation is the understanding of social, economic and political evolution (what Inglehart and Welzel (2005: 1) refer to as ‘human development’ in their revised version of modernisation theory) as a linear process. In this linear process, as Moore explains, the principles of capitalist development and democracy are, at least in some cases, intrinsically intertwined as they are both ‘directly antithetical’ to the principles they originally suppressed during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, i.e. the idea of ‘divinely supported authority in politics, and production for use rather than for individual profit in economics’ (1966 [1993]: 19-20). The main tenet of modernisation is thus that the guiding principle of capitalism – i.e. that ‘unrestricted use of private property for personal enrichment necessarily produces through the mechanism of the market steadily increasing wealth and welfare for society as a whole’ (*ibid*) – develops alongside the necessary political structures for it to thrive. Economic, political and social developments are part of a single linear process characterised by economic liberalism and political democracy. Many democratisation scholars then, based on Seymour Martin Lipset’s breakthrough work (1959), and taking advantage of new methodologies and technology, have developed specific linear explanations for democracy in which ‘the level of economic development correlate[s] positively with democracy’ (Huber, *et al.*, 1993: 71).

Although this very basic principle has been analysed and questioned many times before by studies following the two main traditions of democratisation studies – large-n statistical analysis and small-n comparative studies – there is still no consensus on what the relationship between level of development and democracy actually is. There is not even a consensus amongst those who agree that there is some sort of correlation. On the one hand, there is a ‘weak version’ of the argument (a weak version of modernisation if you wish) that ‘claims that increased levels of economic development are *associated* with democracy’ (Landman, 1999: 607), whilst on the

other, there is a 'strong version' of modernisation that suggests that 'economic development causes democracy' (*ibid*). And there are also those who see economic development as a consequence of political institutions rather than the other way around (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012). This strict institutionalist view, often sees democracy as the cause of a number of positive developments other than a better economic performance; some of the expected consequences of democracy include better consolidated state institutions, better established legal structures, domestic and international peace – Kant famously saw democratic governments as a condition for his 'Perpetual Peace' – and better redistribution and/or welfare institutions (Carbone, 2009: 124). All these positive consequences constitute what we would understand as development, thus reversing the causal flow: democracy causes development rather than the other way around. And as expected of course, there is a view, proposed by Todd Landman (1999) and others, that sees the whole premise of a positive correlation between socioeconomic development and democracy as being spurious.

Establishing beyond doubt the correlation between economic development and democracy is outside the scope of this thesis – not to mention possibly unattainable. Yet, considering that this thesis understands democratisation as a multicausal process, the vast amount of literature that deals with the correlation between development and democracy simply cannot be ignored. After all, a range of multicausal (Diamond *et al*, 1995; Huntington, 1991; Linz and Lipset, 1996) and monocausal models (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005; Lipset, 1959) acknowledge that economic development plays a part in democratisation processes. As Huber *et al.* claim 'any account of the social and economic conditions of democracy must come to terms with the central findings of the cross-national statistical research: a sturdy (though not perfect) association between economic development and democracy' (1993: 72). In any case, even if one does not share the deterministic view that socioeconomic factors are the one variable that can explain democratisation, we have to acknowledge that economic developments almost certainly play an important part. Geoffrey Pridham (1991: 6), for example, argues that, especially when analysing the role international aspects play in democratisation, international socioeconomic conditions and structures can shape the frame in which decisions have to be taken. This is particularly so in cases 'where this frame – as in Western Europe – is moving along the path of transnational integration' (*ibdi*). In the instance of our two case studies, internationalisation changed the access to resources and, as such, narrowed the available options that could be taken.

At the same time, there is something to be said about the overall role economic structures play in political developments. Analysing socioeconomic development is not only about measuring the performance of the economy but also about how the economy itself is organised. With this in mind, before analysing the correlation between internationalisation, socioeconomic growth and democracy in Spain and Mexico, it is necessary to present a detailed analysis of how

changing economic structures and institutions can affect political change in more ways than simply transforming, as Inglehart suggests, the values and attitudes of society.

4.1. Institution, structure and historical contingency

It seems obvious enough to say that history and context matter. Different theories of development, though, place different levels of importance on historic and structural contingencies, but most hypotheses that seek to explain regime transitions tend to at least acknowledge the basic relevance of 'structural contingencies'. It probably goes without saying that multilevel explanations of democratisation usually have a place in their models for structural and historical considerations. What role they give to history though varies from model to model. As seen in the second chapter, Linz and Stepan, for example, emphasise the need to account for, at the very least, the characteristics of the regime that immediately precede democracy. In their view, civilian led regimes 'will characteristically have greater institutional, symbolic, and absorptive capacities than either military or sultanistic leaders to initiate, direct and manage a democratic transition' (1996: 68). As ever though, this may not be sufficient or indeed straightforward. Categorising authoritarian regimes as civilian-led, sultanistic or military can be fairly simple in some cases (e.g. the National Reorganisation Process in Argentina between 1976 and 1983 was clearly a military regime, whilst Alberto Fujimori's regime in Peru was clearly a civilian one, albeit backed by the military), but this is not always the case. Linz and Stepan themselves recognised this issue and acknowledged that an 'exception to the above assertion might seem to be the case of civilian-led, non-democratic regimes based on a monopoly party' (*ibid*). Mexico under the PRI regime seems to fit this latest category, but Franco's Spain is harder to classify. Although initially a military dictatorship, it moved away from a strictly military command by introducing, from the 1950s, civilian technocrats into key positions. Indeed the (mainly Opus Dei) technocrats that occupied many of the key roles in the regime from the mid 1950s (such as Laureano López Rodó who served as Commissioner for Development and then as Foreign Affairs Minister, or Mariano Navarro Rubio who was the Finance Minister between 1957 and 1965, and who then became the Governor of the Bank of Spain) helped the regime become a 'modernising dictatorship' (Casanova, 1983: 31). It is also worth considering that although the Franco regime was fairly institutionalised, it never relied on a coherent political movement articulated as a party (much as the PRI regime or the former communist states did). If nothing else, the likely differences in the access to opportunities allowed by different regimes depending on their level of institutionalisation should be enough to convince us that the structural conditions that precede the moment of transition always matter.

Also as explained in the second chapter, Diamond, Linz and Lipset's deliberations on democratic transitions also allow for a number of variables to interact. They too attribute a

degree of importance to historical and structural considerations, albeit from a slightly different perspective. In their view, 'democratic success in developing countries can be traced not only to the growth of democratic values but also to their roots in a country's historical and cultural traditions' (1995: 20). This notion is backed, as discussed in the second chapter, by José María Magone's explanation of how, based on the Spanish experience, political institutions help produce a 'congruent culture' that will in turn help sustain these institutions (1996). In that same section, we analysed Arend Lijphart's (1980) logic of how institutions, by force of political culture's being shaped by 'cognitive orientations', always contribute towards the shaping of a culture conducive to democracy. Hence, institutional developments will leave a mark on a political culture, which in turn will contribute towards the shaping of future institutional arrangements. This view certainly gives a considerably more important role to history than Linz and Stepan's explanation (or indeed many of the modernisation and culturalists explanations). In a sense they share the views of many of the big historical accounts of macrosocial change (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012; Moore 1966 [1993]; Schumpeter 1942 [2011]; Skokpol, 1979) of history being a linear series of causalities. This interpretation goes further than modernisation theory – as it cannot be considered a middle-range theory – but is closely related to the idea of structural contingencies. In short, whilst previous experiences with democracy (whether positive or negative) will have a direct influence on a nation's attitudes towards it and thus shape the range of options available to the elites, socioeconomic development opens new opportunities for different groups, thus changing the overall structure within which transitions to democracy take place.

4.2. Can modernisation theory explain democracy everywhere?

Modernisation scholars roughly believe that democratisation is a by-product of development. At the same time, the basic claim is that development (in any form) stems from a specific type of economic growth. Hence, in order to understand how economic developments affect political change, we have to account for how a country achieves economic growth. Inglehart argues that economic success can help maintain any sort of political regime but 'unless economic development is accompanied by certain changes in social structure and political culture, liberal democracy is unlikely to result' (1988: 1220). Only a certain type of economic growth (i.e. one that leads to the 'occupational diversification, social complexity, and knowledge-intensity that characterise the creative economies of postindustrial societies' (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005:45) can cause the right changes. Thus, in order to establish if a country's economic growth is the 'right' type of growth, one invariably has to look at the broad economic context of that country.

An example – particularly in a Latin American setting – commonly used to illustrate how important the economic context of a country actually is, is that of the divergent political (and

developmental) paths Colombia and Venezuela took after independence in the nineteenth century. The 'staple-led development' hypothesis claims that the variable that explains the divergent outcomes in the political developments of these two nations is the different approaches they took to economic growth. In a nutshell, Venezuela and Colombia share a similar geography and a common history of colonialism, whilst both countries avoided major revolutions and/or civil wars by maintaining a relative stability of elite competition since independence, which also explains why both established some sort of democratic regimes early on – in relation to the rest of Latin America of course. However, Venezuela modernised considerably earlier based on an industrialisation project that was a response to the country's oil production. According to Terry Lynn Karl, 'petroleum is the single most important factor explaining the creation of structural conditions for the breakdown of military authoritarianism and the subsequent persistence of democracy' in Venezuela (1986: 175). This rapid industrialisation, so the explanation goes, led to the emergence of an increasingly complex industrial economy that was incompatible with the ostracism of the authoritarian regime. On the other hand, resource-poor Colombia had to rely on coffee production and a largely rural population to attain economic growth. Colombia's process of development also allowed for the formation of the 'Colombian National Front' in 1958, which was nothing else than a pact between the Colombian Conservative Party and the Colombian Liberal Party to alternate government every four years. Leaving aside the clear problem that alternation of power cannot mean democracy when the actual electoral process has been reduced to a mere formality, this pact excluded a big part of the society: the left-wing peasantry. It was this political exclusion combined with open military repression that, according to Bejarano, 'finally drove the Colombian Communists to form a guerrilla movement' (2011: 165). Colombia's inability to incorporate left-wing groups into the democratic system was, therefore, a direct consequence of its rural-based economy. Venezuela's stronger labour movement that emerged after oil-based industrialisation, however, was incorporated into the democratic framework. This apparently explains why Venezuela's democracy was more 'successful' from the mid 1960s to the mid 1980s (figure 4.1).

In this example, a specific export commodity dictates a nation's path of economic and political development. Despite its rather one-dimensional nature, this example highlights the necessity to analyse and understand historical developments in order to explain political transitions. Having said this though, Colombia and Venezuela's divergent industrialisation processes do not accurately explain their very similar democratic development since 1945. It may partly explain why a left-wing guerrilla movement emerged in Colombia and/or why Venezuela's democracy fared slightly better for a period of time. But it does not accurately explain why two countries with very different economic structures bucked the authoritarian trend in Latin America for the better part of the 20th Century. This theory also fails to explain why a similarly coffee-exporting

country like Costa Rica has been far more successful at establishing democracy than either Colombia or Venezuela¹ (figure 4.1). Neither, for that matter, does this hypothesis explain why Guatemala, El Salvador or Nicaragua – all coffee producing nations – have all been far less successful in maintaining democracy than Colombia (figure 4.2) (Bejarano, 2011: 34), or why Mexico's experience with democracy, despite being an important oil producer, has been so different to that of Venezuela².

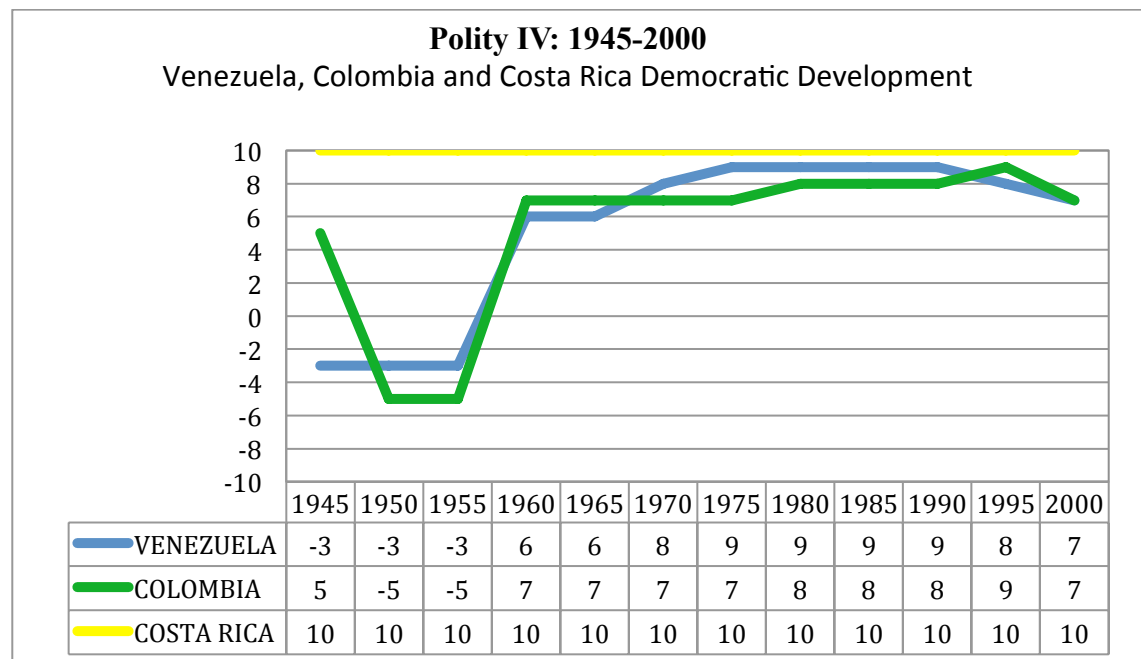


Figure 4.1. *Polity IV Project: Political Regimes Transitions and Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2010.* A scale from -10 to 10 is applied; 10 'being full democracy', 6 to 9 being 'democracy', 1 to 5 'open autocracy', -5 to 0 'closed anocracy', and -10 to -6 'autocracy'.

Probably more relevant to this thesis but still from a modernisation perspective, is Robert Kaufman's (1986) analysis of how an accurate indicator of political change is the way a country deals with the internationalisation of its economy. Beginning from a 'political-economic perspective' his analysis of Latin American authoritarianism in the 1970s and 1980s,

¹ One explanation is that whilst the rest of the Central American coffee producing countries had centralised land-owning elites that opposed democratisation, Costa Rican elites were dispersed all over the country and included a commercial and financial elite in the urban centres, and a 'relatively autonomous agrarian middle class, a significant urban middle class and a class of small farmers' (Huber *et al*, 1993: 82). This led to a demilitarisation of the country and to a more or less homogeneous development of a strong civil society (*ibdi*).

² The growth of Mexico's oil sector has been as impressive as Venezuela's since the beginning of last century; in 1920 Mexico's production of 157,069 barrels in 1920 (INEGI, 2009) was far superior to that of the still underdeveloped Venezuelan oil sector. Despite the impressive growth of Venezuela's energy sector from the mid 1920s onwards, Mexico's oil production increased drastically since the late 1970s; whilst Venezuela's production averaged 2,246 barrels per day in 1980, Mexico's production was an equally impressive 2,219 barrels per day. Since 1982 Mexico's average oil production has been greater than Venezuela's; whilst Mexico's oil production peaked in 2004 when production averaged 3,847.933 barrels per day, Venezuela's average production dropped to 2,581.429 barrels per day in 2003 and has not averaged more than 3,000 barrels per day since (US Energy Information Administration). Certainly crude oil production is not an accurate estimate of the sectors' size as a whole (Venezuela's sector is constrained by its OPEC commitments) but it still shows both countries have been big oil producers for at least the last forty years.

‘presupposes a partial but systematic link between the formations of bureaucratic-authoritarian governments and a syndrome associated with the post-World War II developmental setting’: that of an import-substitution model of development (1986: 85). In Kaufman’s view, the historic elements that explain political change are not what a country produces but rather how it deals with the inherent pressures of adopting new economic strategies. His analysis concludes that, given the structural constraints, the only viable way towards democratisation in Latin America is through a centre-right coalition that protects the interest of the internationalised capital, as long as it achieves some basic redistribution of economic and political power. This is, according to Kaufman, far from ‘genuine economic democracy’ but, given the structural and historical constraints, was the best Latin America could aspire to (*ibid*: 107).

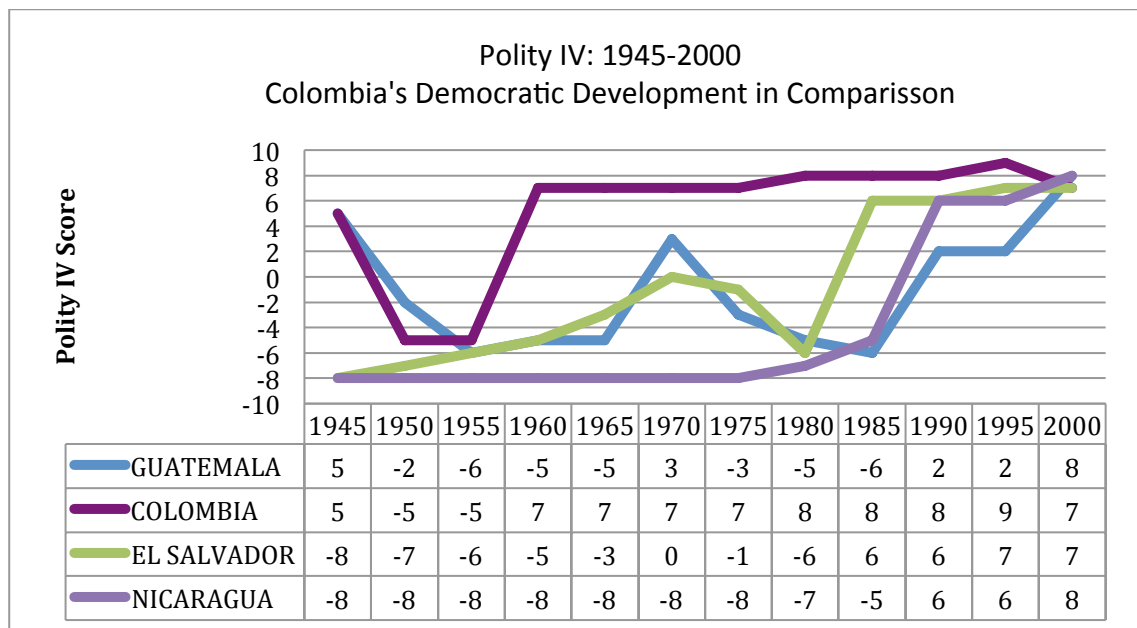


Figure 4.2. See 4.1.

This explanation may fit the bill for many Latin American countries (Chile and Peru come to mind) but fails to explain, for example, Argentina’s turbulent political and economic ride since democratisation in the 1980s. This turbulent ride is probably what led Steven Levitsky (2005: 66) to claim that for much of the twentieth century Argentina ‘was one of the world’s leading democratic underachievers’. Levitsky’s critical view of Argentinian democracy is not based purely on performance issues – there were many other regimes in Latin America that were just as repressive (or even more so) than the Argentinian military dictatorship of the 1970s and 1980s – but rather on the characteristics surrounding Argentina’s democratic setbacks. Argentina has the dubious honour of being the highest income country ever to have suffered democratic breakdown. In 1976 Argentina had a GDP per capita of \$1, 701 (current USD), whilst Portugal’s GDP per capita in 1974, when the Carnation Revolution overthrew Salazar and Caetano’s Estado Novo, was a marginally higher \$1, 904 (World Bank DataBank, 2013a).

Similarly, Argentina's democratic survival since 1983 is just as puzzling as its collapse in the 1970s. Albeit with the benefit of hindsight, the democratic evolution of Argentina seems to contradict Kaufman's argument that the survival of democracy in Latin America depended on how a centre-right coalition dealt with the increased contradictions that emerged from historical structural constraints. In strict modernisation terms, democracy in Argentina could not have survived the many economic crises and different governments that threatened both the international capital as much as the welfare of the general population. The historical contingencies that supposedly would limit Argentina's democratic development to a centre-right coalition were simply not there. Carlos Menem's Peronist government introduced neoliberal reforms (with many of its usual devastating consequences) following a period of severe economic troubles (the hyperinflation crisis of 1989 saw inflation reach 200 per cent in July and a total of 5,000 per cent for the year). Although the economic situation did improve briefly, the 1999 crisis devastated the economy and brought an end to Fernando de la Rúa's presidency. The crisis was such that by the end of 2003 more than half the population were living under extreme poverty, the economy shrank almost 10 per cent in 2002, inflation was above 40 per cent for the same year and Argentina defaulted on credit payments... Yet Argentina's democracy survived! (figures 4.3 and 4.4) These developments do seem to challenge Kaufman's argument – and other modernisation theorists' approach – of a structural contingency based on economic development. To understand democratic setbacks and survival in Argentina – much as is needed for Mexico and Spain – we need to analyse other sources of democratic strength such as political culture, civil society and party strength (Levitsky, 2005: 69-72).

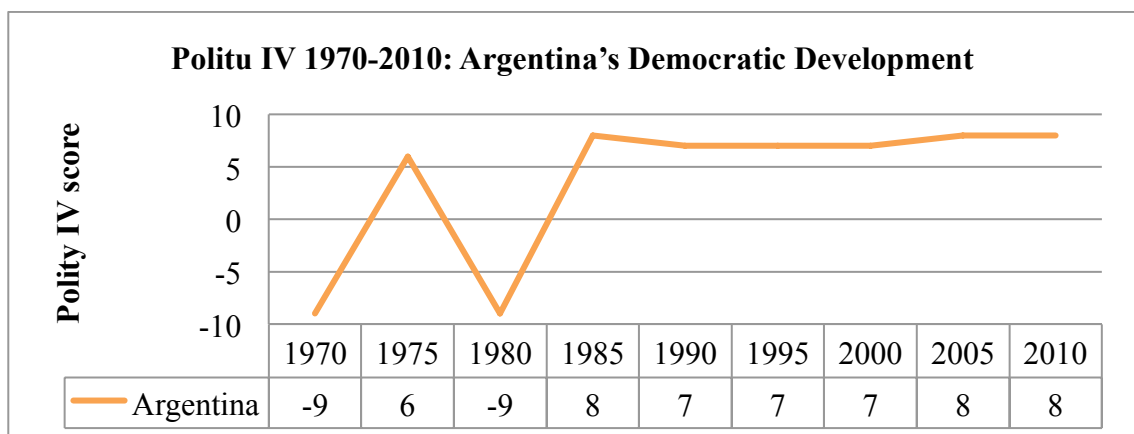


Figure 4.3. See 4.1.

We may be tempted to say, then, that modernisation theories do not offer convincing generalisations (or a covering law to use Charles Tilly's term (2001: 22)) that can account for divergent paths in democratic development. What they do, however, is elucidate how, at least to a degree, socioeconomic considerations account for some degree of the structural contingencies during democratic transitions. In Terry Lynn Karl's explanation it was the history of industrialisation of Venezuela – albeit severely constrained by its structural circumstances, i.e.

the availability of oil – that explains its democratic evolution. Similarly, Robert Kaufman's analysis has to account for, at the very least, the brief history of capital internationalisation and regime evolution. The case of Colombia and Venezuela, thus, may not support the linear assumption of modernisation, yet there is no denying that Venezuela's oil-based industrialisation led to very different political challenges than those faced by the more rural and agrarian Colombia. Similarly the case of Argentina may seem to challenge the basic assumption of modernisation theory, but we need to consider that Argentina's turbulent experience with democracy does not mean that the socioeconomic structure did not lead to the very same sort of social pressure that led to democratic advancements or regressions. The Argentinian example evidences that socioeconomic development may not be enough to explain and predict democratisation, but this does not mean that socioeconomic structures are not relevant.

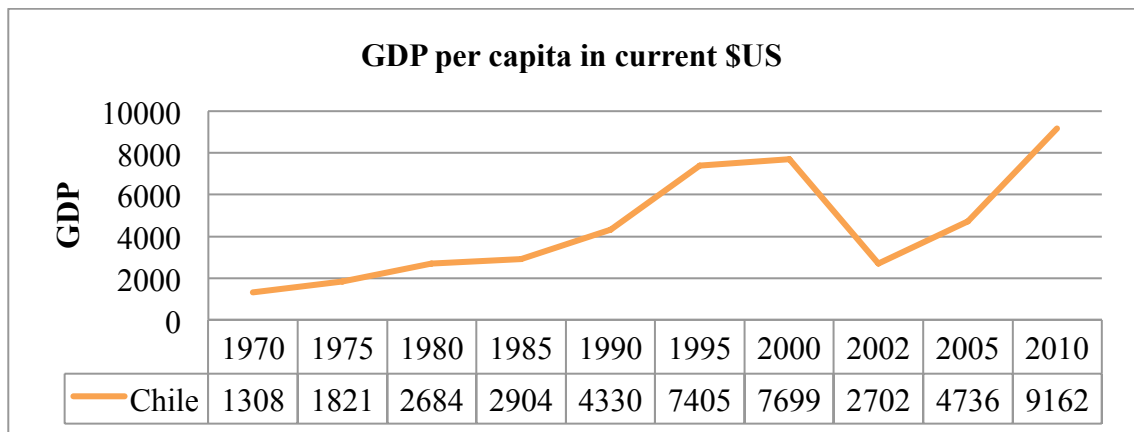


Figure 4.4. World Bank Databank, 2012

Modernisation or socioeconomic oriented explanations are not the only ones that consider the role structure plays in shaping political outcomes. In fact, culturalist explanations also rely on structural contingencies. A valid criticism of culturalist explanations of political development is that most of its postulates 'lead to the expectation of political continuity' (Eckstein, 1998: 789). Most scholars from the political culture school see cultural syndromes as durable and hence, 'even if slightly modified by short-term forces, their fundamental effects persist over the long haul' (Jackman and Miller, 1996: 635). This is because culturalist scholars tend to consider that change does not respond exclusively to 'situations' but also to the cultural pre-dispositions that dictate an individual's behaviour. Since the orientations that shape culture only change over prolonged periods of time, explaining sudden political change becomes problematic. Hence, the analysis of political evolution hinges on more than a historical analysis of how a given country reaches key junctures (e.g. democratic transitions) in their history; this has to be complemented by, and in a way is dependent on, the analysis of the general 'cognitive, affective and evaluative predispositions' that condition behaviour (Eckstein, 1998: 792). It is not as important, then, how we get to a point where transitions become increasingly likely, but how it is that culture will dictate how individuals will behave in those circumstances. In the case of Argentina, for

example, 'the traumatic experience of the Dirty War led to a "profound metamorphosis of Argentine political culture"' (Levitsky, 2005: 69). The mass-level trauma very much conditioned the behaviour of most Argentinians, which, combined with other structural elements, led to an unprecedented support for democracy even in the face of huge adversity (e.g. economic crises). A similar process took place during the Spanish transition to democracy. The memory of the civil war, which had to be avoided at all costs, was an important factor that led to the moderation of certain actors (especially the left) during the transition to democracy (Aguilar, 1997 and 2000: 33). Similarly, the social consensus in favour of European membership functioned, as we will see in the sixth chapter, as an additional guarantee that the elites would not deviate from the democratic path.

Samuel Huntington also reminds us that, even if cultural traits can be 'fundamental obstacles to progress' (2000: xxviii) in some instances, culture in itself 'is not an independent variable. It is influenced by numerous factors, for example, geography and climate, politics, and the vagaries of history' (*ibid*: xxvii). Therefore, history, along with geography and politics, and I would argue socioeconomic development, all contribute towards the shaping of an overall structure – or returning to Marxists terms, the 'überhaus' – that shapes culture as much as it is culture shaping the structure. Although this reinforcing dynamic between culture and institutions will be discussed in detail in the sixth chapter, for now let us just say that in this reinforcing cycle, the study of the socioeconomic structure becomes as important as the study of politics and/or geography. Although not necessarily culturalist, Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel's theory of political evolution shares this reinforcing view. The 'modernisation side' of their argument – i.e. that socioeconomic development leads to a political change – already implies that a country's economic structure is relevant. However, Inglehart and Welzel claim that, although socioeconomic development is the variable that causes change, there are other factors that also shape the outcome of this change. They claim that 'although socioeconomic development tends to transform societies in a predictable direction, the process is not deterministic' (2005: 46). The pre-existing culture (i.e. before industrialisation) of a country will combine with socioeconomic process to form new political cultures. In this sense, their theory goes further than many 'middle-range' theories as it calls for the need to analyse the very foundations of a nation's identity.

Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba also acknowledge that certain structural contingencies play a part in shaping political cultures. They see key specific events as catalysts that can transform both political structures and, thus, political cultures; one such event, for instance, was the Mexican Revolution of 1910, which completely transformed the previous structure and succeeded in stimulating 'modern and democratic aspirations and expectations' (1989: 38). They also view the processes of nation-building as key to understanding why some political

cultures are more homogeneous than others, which is a key characteristic of stable regimes (1989: 25-30). In essence then, the analysis of socioeconomic development and conditions is not only relevant for the study of democratisation if we are following a strict modernisation perspective. In the view of this author, even if not following a strict modernisation approach, the analysis of socioeconomic developments can still help explain transformations in the overall structure (as we will see later on, changes in economic policies shape the resources available to different political actors by, for instance in Mexico, changing the size of the state), which can help us better understand how democratisation happens.

4.3. The elephant in the room: internationalisation, economic growth and democracy

Having acknowledged and discussed in detail the many intricacies and contributions modernisation theory can make to the study of democratisation – but without ignoring its many different interpretations or the many unanswered questions that still surround its main premises – we can now analyse the impact NAFTA and the EEC had on Mexico and Spain's economic development. A key aspect that should be borne in mind here is that, although the key aspect of modernisation theory, this analysis will try and look at more than the direct correlation between socioeconomic development and democratisation. Although this will certainly be dissected, an equally important objective of this analysis is to present a breakdown of how internationalisation influenced the broad socioeconomic structure (i.e. changes in the resources available and their distribution within the state) that shaped the transitions to democracy in Spain and Mexico.

4.3.1 Early liberalisation and development in Spain: the '*Desarrollo* Years', the Stabilisation Plan and the Preferential Trade Agreement

The period of accelerated economic growth that followed Franco's Stabilisation Plan of 1959 and that came to a sudden end in 1975 is commonly referred to as the *Desarrollo* (development) years. According to data from the World Bank, in 1961 the Spanish economy grew more than almost every other country in the world and was the fastest growing economy in Europe (figure 4.5). What is more, this was neither an isolated event nor a phenomenon caused solely by variations in the international market. The *desarrollo* years in Spain were made possible by a combination of mainly external factors. The Cold War, for starters, had helped the Franco regime end its international ostracism and, having originally missed out on Marshall aid due to strong opposition from the French (Messenger, 2006: 50-51) and from Atlee's Labour government in Britain (Portero, 1999: 222-223), Spain received extensive economic aid from the United States following the Pact of Madrid of 1953 which allowed the United States to use military bases in Spain (Balfour, 2000: 278). The signing of this agreement had an important

impact on Spain's economic development as over \$500 million in economic aid – plus an extra \$600 million in military aid – poured into its economy. At the same time, once Spain's status as a pariah state was lifted, private credit institutions in the United States were comfortable enough to start lending in Spain – from 1953 to 1963 over \$1 billion worth of credit flowed into Spain (Liedtke, 1999: 237-238). Besides the impact this aid may have had on the economy, what is more significant is that the sudden benefits of accessing credit and foreign capital did help convince the regime's elite that *apertura* (opening up) was necessary. The 1959 plan signified a complete transformation of the economy under the leadership of the technocrats. During the 1960s and 1970s Spain experienced the sort of economic growth that Inglehart and Welzel (2005: 82) define as the right kind of economic development – i.e. one that consists not only of GDP per capita growth but also of industrialisation and fair redistribution. At the same time, we need to recognise that, unlike economic performance (GDP growth in a given year), which is merely an immediate indicator, socioeconomic development is a cumulative variable, and needs to be measured accordingly. After all, 'annual increases in a society's GDP always constitute a small percentage of that society's GDP', thus these type of variables only show 'substantial changes only over the long run' (*ibid*: 213). Therefore, although the data from 1961 is a good short-term indicator of a specific event, i.e. the impact of the Stabilisation Plan on the economy, it really does not say much about Spain's societal transformations that, according to modernisation scholars, help us predict democratisation.

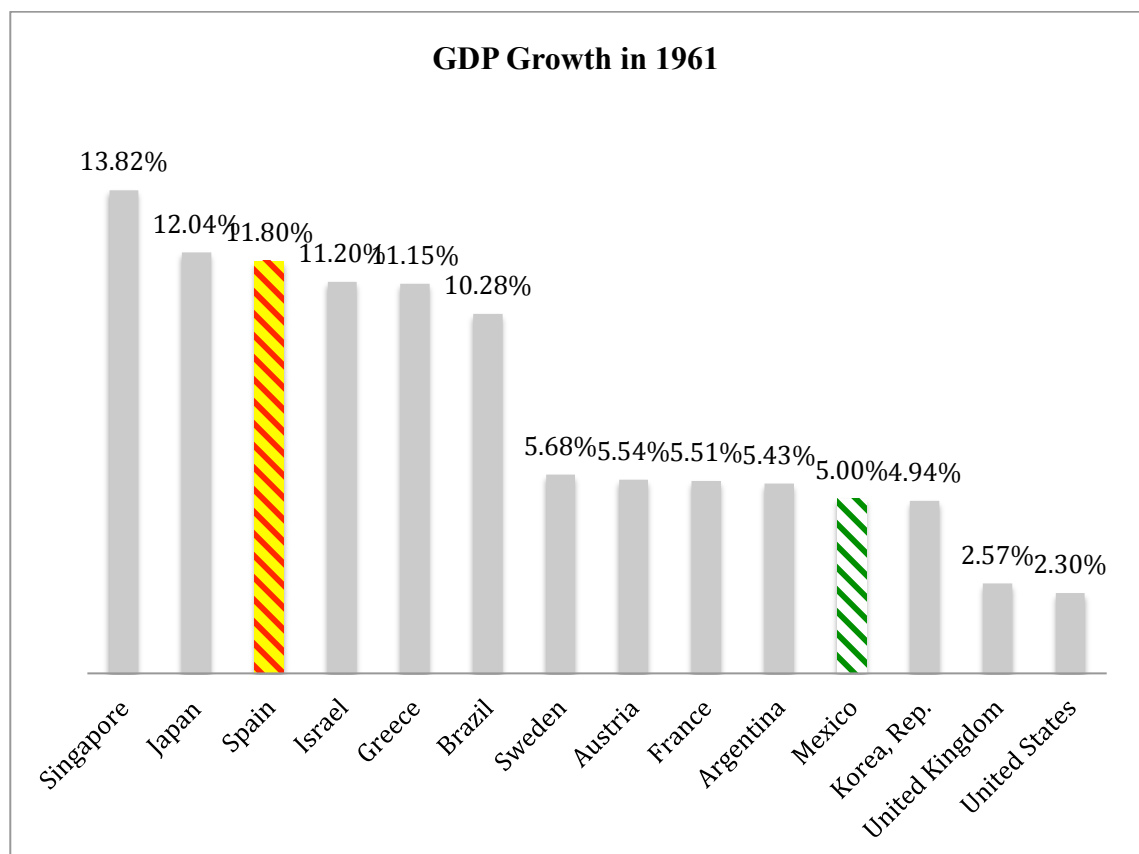


Figure 4.5. GDP growth rates in 1961. Data from The World Bank DataBank

A wider analysis of economic indicators however, shows that, although Spain never reached the same level of economic expansion it enjoyed in 1961, the country's GDP per capita grew at a steady and remarkable pace during the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s. GDP per capita more than doubled between 1960 (\$3,711 constant 2000 US\$) and 1975 (\$8,465 constant 2000 US\$), and, probably more significantly, this improvement in the economic situation was accompanied by other relevant developments. This is probably down to the fact that Spain's economic growth was not fuelled just by the simple liberalisation of the economy, and its immediate effects on the increase of tourism, the export of raw materials and/or commodities or the remittances sent back to Spain (Sampere, 2003: 91-92) (which according to one estimate totalled as much as \$5 billion between 1960 and 1973 (Balfour, 2000: 279). Certainly the common explanation that sees the 'Spanish Miracle' as a consequence of an increase in tourism during the late 1960s and early 1970s, and the subsequent development of the real estate and construction sectors is not entirely off the mark. The increase in tourism was mostly European and was fuelled by an overall increase in the standard of living in Western and Northern European countries; the number of tourists rose from 4 million in 1959 to 14 million in 1964, and the economic significance of the industry rose accordingly as earnings from tourism went from \$129 million to \$919 million in the same period (Balfour, 2000: 279). The tourism industry did not only help create new service-oriented jobs, but it also provided much-needed currency to 'finance machinery and technology imports which were needed to foster the Spanish economy' (Balaguer and Cantavella-Jordá, 2002: 877); it has also been argued that tourism facilitated the interaction of Spaniards with the outside world and thus contributed towards the sort of societal transformation that makes democracy likelier to occur (Tusell, 2005: 197).

Whether there is truth in this explanation, there is little doubt that Spain's economic growth during this period had more to do with just a boom in the tourism industry. Certainly tourism, foreign investment and emigration to Europe were three important catalysts for the economic growth (*ibid*) but they do not present the whole picture. The Stabilization Plan of 1959 was more than a mere attempt to liberalise the Spanish economy or to promote Spain as a tourist destination³. The 'Spanish Miracle' was to a great extent caused by the development of a new industrial model based on a mass production strategy supported by a large working class, low-wages and the corporatist structures facilitated by Francoism (Sampere, 2003: 92). It could be said that Spain was one of the first experiments of what later became the 'conventional, neoliberal approach' to democratisation that was to be applied in post-communist Europe (Pickles and Smith, 1998: 1). Although a detailed explanation of the economic developments

³ Although the influential minister during the 1960s (and eventual founder of Alianza Popular) Manuel Fraga Iribarne, then in charge of the Ministry of Information and Tourism, did orchestrate a very successful campaign under the slogan 'Spain is different!' – which is a line widely attributed to Napoleon Bonaparte – in what proved to be a master stroke by the regime in its attempts to transform Spain's image abroad from a backward nation into one of traditions, flamenco, bullfighting and sunshine.

during the 1960s and 1970s would require a deep analysis and thus falls outside the scope of this thesis, it is important for the objectives of this project to examine how the economic reforms of the time led to some gradual structural transformations that could have made democracy an ever likelier outcome, as well as the role Europe played in this development.

As we can see in figure 4.6, it is clear that the economic growth of the time led to an urbanisation of Spanish society. According to some estimates, during the 1960s some 5 million people moved from their places of origin to some of the main industrial centres in Spain or abroad, and the share of the economically active population engaged in the industrial sector grew roughly from 27.4 per cent in 1950 to 48.4 per cent in 1975 (Sampere, 2003: 92). Although a rough estimate, since the data from 1950 was gathered from the population census rather than from sources dealing specifically with these questions, these rough numbers do paint a clear picture of a country involved in a process of rapid industrialisation. Other World Bank indicators (World Bank DataBank, 2013b) from the time help us complete the picture of a rapidly changing economic structure. By 1974, Spain's industrial production as percentage of GDP (40.1 per cent) was already similar to other Western industrialised nations such as France (33.1 per cent), West Germany (44.3 per cent), the United Kingdom (40.1 per cent) or even the United States (34 per cent) – it was also considerably higher than the highest percentage Mexico has ever achieved (38 per cent in 1987) – albeit all these nations had already started a process of post-industrial development. This rapid industrialisation also led to an impressive increase in Spanish exports as a percentage of GDP. In 1964 Spain's exports of goods and services represented 7.6 per cent of its GDP but by 1974 that number increased to 8.74 per cent – and would continue to grow as the process of European integration intensified. The sixth chapter will deal in detail with the many societal transformations inherent in this sort of socioeconomic development but, for now, let us briefly analyse the role Europe played in this process.

According to Sebastian Balfour, between 1961 and 1973 Spain managed to transform from a 'predominantly agrarian society on the fringes of Europe' to an 'industrialised urban and consumer society largely integrated into Europe' (Balfour, 2000: 279). This transformation was triggered, as we have discussed, by a combination of factors that included the Stabilisation Plan of 1959, economic aid received by the United States, an unprecedented increase in tourism and remittances, and an overall process of industrialisation. Yet Europe also played a key part in this process. Indeed, once economic relations with Europe were partially reinstated in the early 1960s, thanks in part to the alliance with the United States, Spain was 'sucked into the Western economic boom' (Balfour and Preston, 1999: 2). First of all, as the Stabilisation Plan eased the constraints on foreign investment in Spain, an unprecedented increase in FDI was experienced. Of the approximately six billion dollars of FDI between 1959 and 1974, European capital represented over 42 per cent of the total (Tusell, 2005: 198). These figures by themselves, albeit

impressive, do not necessarily mean a lot. What is important to understand is what this investment meant for the Franco regime; it very much convinced the dictator that participation in the economic integration of Europe, under the right conditions, could only benefit the regime.

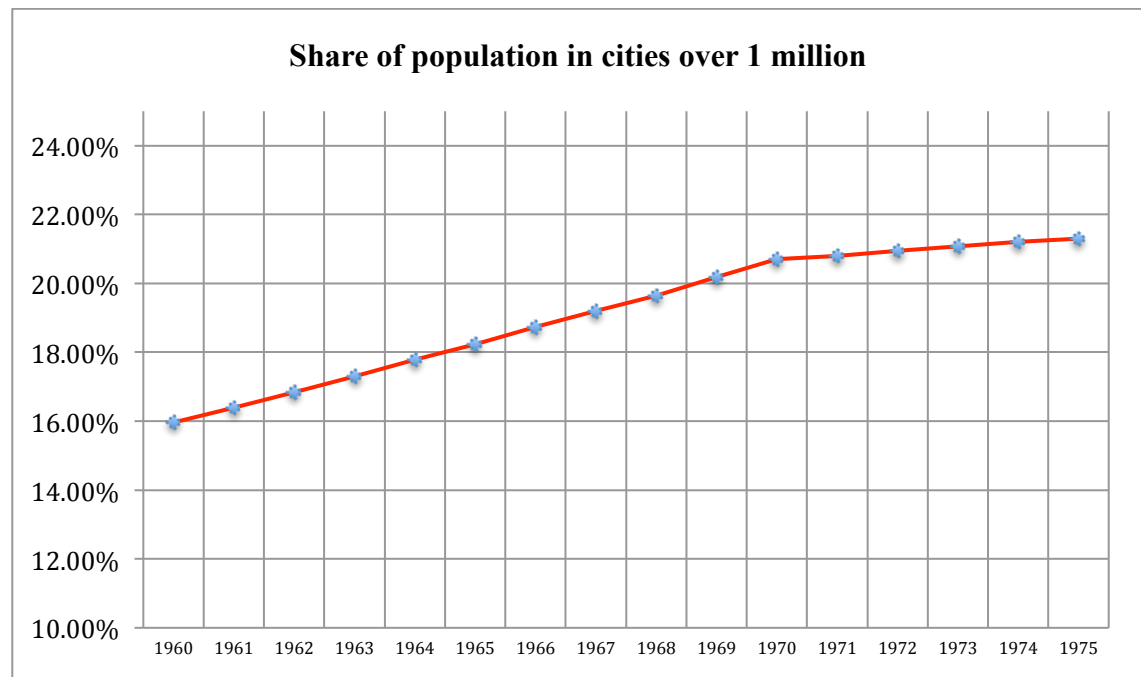


Figure 4.6. Growth of urban population in Spain. Data from The World Bank DataBank and Sampere (2003)

The Franco regime, we must not forget, was distinctly anti-European during its early stages and Franco himself – identifying with traditional Spanish conservatism – saw Europe as the problem rather than the solution (Crespo MacLennan, 2004: 24). Franco himself, then, had made no secret of his mistrust of the emerging process of European integration during the 1950s and was apparently reluctant to show an interest in participating out of fear of being rejected (Powell, 2007: 46). The picture drastically changed once it became clear Great Britain – who along with the United States had always preferred pragmatism to principle when dealing with Franco – was to join the EEC rather than continue its parallel free trade process under the EFTA. This meant that, Franco having already given up on his dream of self-sufficiency, Spain had little option but to look for some sort of agreement with the EEC. The technocrats that by then dominated the regime managed to convince Franco that applying for association with a view to eventually becoming a full member was the best option (*ibid*). However, the Spanish application for membership to the EEC in 1962 never really seemed to gain traction. First of all, the EEC was already concerned with the troubled process of British accession, and the difficulties of implementing the CAP, to even begin considering what Spanish integration would mean for the process. More importantly though, the 1961 Birkelbach Report by the European Parliamentary Assembly had already enumerated certain political conditions prospective members should comply with (including ‘truly democratic practices’ (Whitehead, 1986: 5)) before joining the

Common Market. However, since this report was not necessarily binding (as it was not included in any of the Treaties), there was always a hope that other pragmatic considerations would weigh more than the desire to see a democratic Spain. After all, Greece and Turkey were accepted into NATO despite the preamble of its Treaty clearly referring to 'the principles of democracy, individual freedom and the rule of law' (*ibid*) as conditions for its members. Both Greece and Turkey went through many periods after their accession in 1952 when they could not have been considered to be defending any of the principles enshrined in NATO's preamble, yet they remained members. The regime's hopes, however, that the EEC would follow in NATO's footsteps were quickly crushed when the Report was duly used as a justification to reject Spanish membership in 1964; the process of European integration was to remain strictly restricted to democratic countries.

Thus, despite already having achieved some degree of international rehabilitation – as a member of the UN and the IMF – the EEC decided to only offer Spain a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) in 1967 rather than full membership; the doors of Europe remained firmly shut to the dictatorship (Viñas, 1999: 246). The regime publicised the signing of the Agreement in 1970 with a rather positive spin and public declarations by the regime's Development Plan Minister, Laureano López Rodó, seemed to suggest the regime's leadership expected Spain to become a full member of the EEC following the PTA (Europa Press, 2/7/1969). That the agreement was not only 'inferior' to those Brussels signed with Morocco and Tunisia (Powell, 2007: 48) was, however, generally overlooked. However, the fact that the regime clearly overstated and/or overestimated the significance of the PTA in an attempt to maintain its claim to legitimacy through economic performance, does not mean the PTA was, in the slightest, irrelevant. Although by the time the PTA was signed the liberalisation of the Spanish economy was already well on its way, we need to consider that the PTA resulted in a considerable increase in Spanish exports towards the EEC (27.5 per cent in the twelve months following the agreement according to official figures) and thus accelerated the liberalisation of the economy. At the same time, it has been argued that the fact that the PTA was believed to be – mistakenly – or was depicted to be – in an attempt to save some dignity – a precursor to full membership in the EEC, encouraged the government and business sectors alike to take some unilateral measures in preparation for accession. Some of these measures included the adoption of the VAT, further industrial restructuring and increasing economic flexibility (Royo, 2003: 8).

At the same time, Charles Powell (2007: 48-51) has explained how the PTA triggered (or at least coincided with) an increase in Spanish exports to EEC members by offering a considerable lowering of its tariffs – which, however, was not entirely reciprocated by Spain since it remained a comparatively protectionist economy. Powell also suggests that there was not only an increase in exports to Europe, but that the types of goods that were being exported changed.

By Powell's reckoning (*ibid*: 49), in 1960 60 per cent of exports to Germany and 55 per cent of those destined to France were still agricultural products. This situation changed gradually during the 1970s as economic ties continued to develop. Certainly agricultural products continued to dominate Spanish exports to the EEC, but the industrial and service industries started to gain some ground. It is obviously very difficult to prove how much of an impact the PTA had in these developments and how much of it was down to the domestic adjustments started by the regime. What is clear to see, however, is that the *desarrollo* years had a deep impact in the Spanish economy, society and, to a lesser extent, the state itself. There seems to be a wide consensus in the academic literature that the period between 1959 and 1974 saw a reformulation of the Spanish economy, which led to a deep transformation of Spanish society (Balfour, 2000: 277; Tusell, 2005: 205; Viñas, 1999: 246), the emergence of new Europeanised bourgeoisies (Holman, 1995), and that saw economic ties with Europe deepen past a point of no return (Powell, 2007: 50). The role the PTA (and Europe in general) played in these early developments is, to an extent, easy to see but hard to prove. The impact the actual process of integration with Europe had on the Spanish economy is, if nothing else, clearer to see and explain.

4.3.2 Europeanisation and economic performance

If anything, the effects of European integration in the economic development of Spain only became more apparent after the death of the dictator and the beginning of the transition to democracy. Once the main barrier to democracy and, by inference, to accession into the European integration process was removed by nature's good work, a more uniform process of Europeanisation started to take place. In more than one way, the process of European integration could be seen as 'extreme internationalisation'. Although it may seem that Europeanisation is no different from any other transition towards an interdependent system, we should consider that Europeanisation distinguishes itself from any other process of internationalisation precisely because it formalises the links of interdependence in institutional arrangements (Closa, 2001: 16-17). The process of formal institutionalisation of interdependence links that exist as mere practices elsewhere is what makes Europeanisation unique. The transformations inherent in Europeanisation for prospective members can hardly be compared with processes outside Europe. Yet, although there seems to be a common view that Europeanisation is a unique and deep-rooted process there still no overarching theory that explains exactly what it is or how it happens (Morata, 2007: 19). At the most basic level, Europeanisation refers to the interaction of two dimensions: the 'bottom-up' and the 'top down'. The former basically refers to 'a process of institution-building at European-level driven by transfer of competencies from the member states to the European Union' (Börzel, 2002: 15). The second dimension refers to 'the potential effects which the evolving European system of

governance has on the institutions of the member states' (*ibid*: 16). A more detailed view sees Europeanisation as a five-level process that also considers – besides the two already mentioned 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' dimensions – the changes in the size of the Union the incorporation of new states entails, the inclusion of multilevel governance, and the 'export' of the new European ways of organising politically and of governance beyond the boundaries of the EU (a sort of extra-European dimension) (Morata, 2007: 19).

As will be discussed in the sixth chapter, it has also been claimed that there has even been a social dimension to Europeanisation that refers to a process of a change in public opinion and social values (Barreiro and Sánchez-Cuenca, 2001), as well as – as mentioned in the previous chapter – a process of 'Europeification' of foreign policy that was more than a mere 'normalisation of international relations' after democracy (Torreblanca, 2001: 511), as it implied a process of institutional adaptation in Spain after it joined the EEC – which included the European Political Cooperation mechanism as an intergovernmental tool of foreign policy 'harmonisation' (Barbé, 2007: 373). The current section, however, focuses on a highly relevant aspect of this process; the influence Europe has in the transformation of the economic system of a member state. Indeed, Carlos Closa argues that probably the most significant transformation in Spain as a result of Europeanisation has been the adoption of a very specific economic model. In his view, by sacrificing social components in favour of free market imperatives, the Spanish state (especially under Felipe González's government) underwent the most significant process of Europeanisation of its policies and institutions (Closa, 2001: 517-518). This economic transformation is often considered beyond Europeanisation simply because it is not, in essence, a process unique to Europe. However, it is hard to disagree with the notion that the reality of Spain's 'deepening integration into a Europeanised market-dominated framework' very much set the logic for the transformation of the Spanish economic model – in particular the intense process of privatisation that took place in the early stages of the transition (Chari and Haywood, 2008: 194). This also helps us explain, for example, why the process of economic transformation did not change significantly despite the changes in rhetoric between the UCD, PSOE and PP governments (*ibid*). Although this process may not be entirely dissimilar to the transformations other countries go through as part of specific projects of economic (neo)liberalisation, the process of European integration – similarly to what NAFTA did with Mexico – very much formalises economic interdependence which makes reversing the process almost impossible or at least incredibly costly.

Either as a phenomenon linked with Europeanisation or as part of a wider trend, it seems that integration with Europe played a very important part in the reformulation of the Spanish economic system. If nothing else, European funds at the very least helped alleviate some of the pain that the economic reforms needed to join the EEC would cause. There is also the argument

that membership into the Common Market ‘offered critical external guarantees to the business and property classes’ in Spain as membership into the EEC more or less ensured ‘prompt and adequate compensation for all private property acquired by the state’ (Whitehead, 1991: 52). This is a key factor not only to ensure economic development but also democratisation. Authoritarian regimes in Spain and Mexico, for example, could not guarantee property rights or a stable tax regime to their respective wealth holders through institutional democratic means; in these cases, the respective governments needed to coax ‘wealth holders into deploying their capital by granting them special privileges design[ed] to raise their rates of return high enough’ to compensate for the extra risks that implied doing business under an authoritarian regime (Haber *et al.*, 2008: 9). In fewer words, European integration, by offering enough guarantees to the business class and granting further access to its markets, very much guaranteed the rich would not oppose democracy (Whitehead, 1991: 52). Mexico joining NAFTA, on the other hand, may have granted access to markets but did not necessarily offered any new guarantees to the Mexican capitalist business class.

Although integration into Europe may generate similar benefits and challenges for new members, the effects of integration can still differ from case to case (Anderson, 1999: 10). Therefore, we should not confuse the challenges and advantages Europeanisation represents with the specific impact European integration had in Spanish democratisation. It would be a mistake to believe that, for example, joining the common market meant a radical overhaul of economic policy for Spain as it did for the post-communist countries joining the EU in the last decade; Spain had already been functioning under a market economy for almost three decades by the time it joined the Common Market. Yet, although a desire to integrate with Europe cannot be considered as the only reason why the regime liberalised its economy – albeit it was one of the reasons – the process of European integration still played an important role in the transformation of Spain’s economy, and in its economic performance in the 1980s and 1990s.

If we were to apply a strictly narrow modernisation rationale (as said before, this refers to the strict linear progression from socioeconomic development to democracy) to the story of Spanish democratisation, we would have little choice but to accept European integration played an important role in this process. Since modernisation theory explains democracy on purely socioeconomic terms, the positive impact the increase in economic ties with Europe during the 1960s had on the Spanish economy should be enough to convince the sceptics. Just as the European fuelled economic development of the 1960s helped transform Spanish society and make democracy a likelier outcome, so did the initial unquestionably positive economic benefits EC membership had for Spain help stabilise the new democracy. According to one estimate, in 1989 EU aid, for instance, (funds established under the Delors I Plan) represented a staggering 1.5 per cent of Spanish GDP, and between 1994 and 1999 European funds represented 15 per

cent of the total public investment in Spain (Royo, 2004: 540); another estimate claims that EU backed projects mobilised an average of about 3.4 per cent of Spanish GDP in the same period (Pastor, 2003: 10). Spain's European fuelled economic growth allowed Spain's per capita GDP to increase from 70 per cent of the EU's GDP per capita average in 1986 to 88 per cent in 2003 (the year before the enlargement to Eastern Europe lowered the EU's average). What is more, European social and regional policies (The European Social Charter, Title V of the Single European Act and Regional European Policy) made sure economic growth did not promote further economic inequality, which, following modernisation theory, is a condition to develop a larger middle class and increase the pressure on the regime to democratise. There even seemed to be an understanding in Spanish society that, as the magazine *Cambio 16* wrote in 1978, 'a new economic, political and social liberalisation' had to take place as an 'inevitable consequence of the economic boom' experienced in Spain (Díaz Dorronsoro, 2012: 61).

There could be an argument that by the time Spain joined the EU in 1986 the 'miracle' had already taken place as Spain had 'succeeded in irreversibly consolidating democratic institutions' (Przeworski, 1991: 8). I disagree. Even if we ignored the impact the transformation of the economic structure inherent in European integration (as said before at the very least EC membership 'secured' these changes), there is still enough evidence to suggest membership into Europe had a real positive impact on the Spanish economy. Firstly, and as I have said before, speaking of 'consolidation' may not be as wise as it was once. In fact the previously acquiesced definition of Spain as a 'consolidated democracy' has been tested in recent times as it becomes increasingly manifest that Spanish institutions (including the Constitution of 1978) are still full of authoritarian references and ambiguities, and have failed to address the key problems with Spanish democracy. I would also argue that Spanish democracy did not achieve 'consolidated' status (even in the academic lingo of the time) until the peaceful alternation of power to a centre-right party in 1996 when the PP reinvented itself as a true alternative to the PSOE, and once the political party system, as explained in the previous chapter, became overwhelmingly democratic and depolarised. In any case, regardless of the quality of Spanish democracy in the early years of its process of European integration, the fact remains that, from a strict perspective of modernisation theory, integration into Europe and the socioeconomic development that this has generated, has, at the very least, exponentially reduced the chances of a democratic regression in Spain, thus contributing to its survival. The evidence also suggests that considerable European aid started flowing towards Spain long before democracy was considered consolidated by anybody's standards. The European Investment Bank, in accordance to pre-accession agreements, started its operations in Spain from 1981. In the period between 1981 and Spanish accession to the EEC in 1986, the Bank had channelled in excess of 550 million euros in loans towards all sorts of development projects. This figure almost doubled (in excess of 960 million euros) the following year (European Investment Bank, 2009). As said

before, it was this development aid – coupled of course with the many other comparative advantages membership into the EEC entailed (access to markets, increase in FDI, access to a wide economy of scale and the protection offered by membership to a commercial bloc) – that partly caused the Spanish economy to grow at the accelerated rates it did.

If one shared the view that fairly distributed socioeconomic development is the only factor behind successful democratisation (Boix and Stokes, 2003: 543) that would be the end of the debate. The EU has clearly had a positive influence on Spanish socioeconomic development – let alone the redefinition of its economic model; hence it played an important role in Spain's transition to and consolidation of democracy.

4.3.3 NAFTA and Mexico's socioeconomic development: the failure of expectation

Even more so than in Spain, there seemed to be a broad expectation that NAFTA-fuelled economic growth would help solve issues of political representation in Mexico. As it transpired, it probably did but not as expected. Before jumping on the NAFTA-bashing bandwagon, however, it is important to acknowledge NAFTA's relative successes. It is fairly clear that NAFTA was successful in achieving its explicit goal: to increase trade between the three countries involved. Even outside official circles the common view is that NAFTA 'succeeded in fostering the growth of trade and investment, promoting economies of scale' but failed in meeting the 'hyperbolic expectations of many of its strongest advocates prior to its enactment', (Domínguez and Fernández de Castro, 2009: 105). NAFTA's remarkably narrow and remarkably explicit goal of simply 'strengthen the special bonds of friendship and cooperation amongst the nations' by creating an 'expanded and secure market for the goods and services produced in their territories', has already been mentioned. Whatever the reasons for setting such an uninspiring objective is, for now, irrelevant. What is important to note is that in this narrow sense NAFTA seems to have attained some level of success. According to the Office of the United States Trade Representative 'from 1993 to 2007, trade among the NAFTA nations more than tripled, from \$297,000 million to \$930,000 million' (USTR, 2008) – clearly NAFTA has achieved its main goal of increasing trade between the three partners.

However, as Robert Pastor points out, NAFTA's 'principal failure was its omissions', which has left the three countries without the capacity to 'anticipate, coordinate or plan for new shocks or take advantage of opportunities' (2003:1); NAFTA lacks the institutional tools to deal with political internationalisation. NAFTA's 'skeletal organisations' are explained by concerns shared by the three governments regarding sovereignty, as well as regarding the high costs of running permanent supranational or intergovernmental institutions (Domínguez and Fernández de Castro, 2009: 71). For the time being, let us focus on what NAFTA was actually trying to

achieve: an increase in trade that would lead to sustained economic growth. Hence, if we were to follow the narrow modernisation approach to democratisation analysed at the beginning of this chapter, measuring NAFTA's influence in Mexico's democratisation would be the same as measuring NAFTA's impact in Mexico's economic development. As said before, neither the link between socioeconomic development and democratisation is beyond doubt – particularly at the regional level (Landman, 1999) – nor is it easy to quantify just how much of an impact NAFTA had in Mexico's economic growth. On one side of the spectrum, most NAFTA supporters constantly refer to the impressive trade statistics that have been achieved under NAFTA's structure in order to prove its positive impact on Mexico's economic performance. Official data presents a link between NAFTA and economic growth, increase in FDI, a decrease of unemployment rates and the creation of better-paid jobs in Mexico (Secretaría de Economía, 2006). A report by economists from the World Bank, goes as far as to claim that 'the Treaty helped Mexico get closer to the levels of development of its NAFTA partners', and that – even more surprisingly – between 1994 and 2002 'NAFTA made Mexico richer than it would have been without NAFTA by about 4 per cent of its [GDP] per capita' (Lederman *et al.*, 2005: 2). Their rather optimistic appraisal of NAFTA's achievements is based on the common explanation regarding an increase in non-oil related exports and an increase in FDI.

At the opposite side of the spectrum there is a view that sees NAFTA as nothing short of a failure. Although the causes of the 1995 economic crisis, which caused the Tequila effect around the world, are contested, what is true is that the collapse of the Mexican Peso in 1995 caused a severe economic crisis and a sharp shrinking of the economy (figure 4.8). NAFTA's supporters tend to see the crisis as a completely exogenous phenomenon from the Treaty. Robert Pastor suggests that the 1995 crisis was simply the result of too much capital 'washing out after a year of instability' (2011: 55), rather than the result of structural shifts inherent in implementing NAFTA and a new economic model. He also seems to ignore the fact that much of the instability he refers to was caused by a Zapatista uprising in Chiapas that was directly linked to the implementation of the Treaty (not for nothing the uprising was launched on the same day NAFTA came into effect), and the murder of key political figures including the PRI's presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio and the leader of the PRI bloc in the Upper House José Francisco Ruiz Massieu (Raúl Salinas – Carlos' brother – was convicted of, amongst other charges including corruption, the murder of the latter but then exonerated for the murder charge in 2005 and of the corruption charges in July 2013). Pastor's view is echoed by the aforementioned World Bank report as it claims that 'it would be a stretch of the imagination to attribute [the negative effects]' of the crisis (i.e. a dramatic fall in real incomes and wages) to NAFTA (Lederman *et al.*, 2005: xvi). Somehow unsurprisingly, former President Carlos Salinas – the main instigator of NAFTA – puts the blame for the crisis at the doorstep of his successor, Ernesto Zedillo, as it was Zedillo whom, according to Salinas, irresponsibly doubled the

emission of state bonds. Zedillo then decided, once the devaluation was imminent, to alert (or 'consult') his plans to a select number of the Mexican business elite who immediately decided to withdraw their capital from the country creating a panic (*Milenio*, 12/4/2012). This version of events contradicts what has become the commonly accepted explanation that it was Salinas who, in a desperate attempt to avoid an economic crisis before the August 1994 presidential elections, delayed the devaluation of the Peso by draining the country's reserves (*ibid*; Cameron and Wise, 2004). The country's crisis was further intensified by an incredibly corrupt banking sector under Salinas that, understanding they were 'too big to fail', had no qualms about granting themselves huge loans that they then defaulted on (Haber *et al.*, 2008: 115-116). As the debate over the real causes for the crisis rumbles on (*Milenio*, 26/4/2011 and 27/4/2011), regardless, it is likely that, as with many other aspects of NAFTA, the gap between the two versions will prove too wide for something resembling consensus to emerge in the near future. Whether or not the 1995 crisis was an indirect consequence of NAFTA or if it was a completely exogenous process, what matters here is that it was not anticipated and that it wiped out any hope of NAFTA delivering on its exaggerated promises.

Even if we were to agree with the version of events that sees the 1995 economic crisis as completely unrelated to NAFTA, there seems to be no clear way to know what sort of impact NAFTA had on Mexico's economic recovery and performance after 1995. Even the impressive trade and FDI statistics that NAFTA supporters often rely on have been questioned. During the earlier stages of Mexico's liberalisation, as it was unilaterally preparing for NAFTA, the investment it received from the United States was mostly 'portfolio capital that quickly fled the country during the panic of 1994-1995' (Blecker, 2003: 9). Although the level of FDI did increase between 1995 and 2001 (when it represented a staggering 4.8 per cent of GDP) (World Bank DataBank, 2013c) this has since steadily declined. Some of Mexico's supposed increase in trade is also 'illusory' since 'the parts and components shipped into Mexico for assembly in *maquiladoras* and then re-exported in an assembled form [were] double counted on both exports and imports' (Blecker, 2003: 10). Similarly, the figures boasted in official circles regarding NAFTA's job creation record in Mexico has been broadly criticised. Albeit true that NAFTA has led to the creation of jobs in export-related activities, it is evidently clear that this job creation has not been enough to keep up with Mexico's high rate of population growth (Moreno-Brid *et al.*, 2005).

In any case, Mexico's average economic growth rate of 2.7 per cent between 1994 and 2010, which pales in comparison to the US 3.3 per cent average, is less than impressive. If we were to look at the inflation-adjusted rate (real GDP growth) the results would be even less inspiring; according to one estimate the average rate of real GDP growth averaged 1.3 per cent a year between 1994 and 2005, which is 'a slow rate by any comparative standard' (Haber *et al.*, 2008:

2). What is more, Mexico's economic policy based on trade-fuelled growth may have proved effective at first, but it has failed to ignite a development of knowledge incentive sectors and overall innovation. As we saw in the previous chapter, once an institutional path is chosen it becomes harder and harder to change it; as seen at the beginning of this chapter, once a policy or institution has been established, especially when dealing with economic policy, it will 'generate powerful incentives that reinforce' its own stability and further development (Pierson, 2000: 255). Since Mexico's economic policy has moved the country away from developing 'first-mover advantages' (i.e. innovation), it is hard to see how this trend will be reversed in the future. Indeed, Paul Pierson has argued that since first-mover advantages are so significant for the continuing economic development of a country, then 'free trade may not be an optimal policy for a country whose trade partners are willing to subsidise emerging sectors' (*ibid*).

Something similar can be said about the reliance on FDI; although foreign capital can initially help a country develop key industries, 'the truth of the matter is, however, that foreign investment is not a substitute for domestic investment' (Haber *et al.*, 2008: 93). NAFTA has, in a way, limited the options for Mexico's economic development and has, most likely, forever linked Mexico's economic performance to that of the United States. Although this is not entirely dissimilar to the situation in Spain, manufacturing and trade have not been the only drivers behind Spanish economic growth. Spain's share of GDP invested in Research and Development (R&D) ten years after joining the EEC was more than double (0.81 per cent in 1996) that of Mexico ten years after signing NAFTA (0.4 per cent in 2004). What is more, whilst Spain's expenditure in R&D as a percentage of GDP continuously increased until 2010 – when the effects of the financial crisis were starting to seriously impact the Spanish economy – and got closer to levels spent by France and Britain, Mexico's expenditure has very much remained constant and well below the other Latin American 'giant', Brazil (figure 4.7). The average output per worker is another noteworthy way of assessing real socioeconomic transformations. In this respect, a comparison between Spain and Mexico throws some interesting results; whilst in the 1950s Spain's output per worker never surpassed the average in Mexico, a few years after the Stabilisation Plan was set in motion 'Spain opened a sizable lead on Mexico', and this lead continued to grow over the next two decades – by the 1970s Spain's average labour productivity advantage over Mexico was 47 per cent (Haber *et al.*, 2008: 56). In short, economic growth does not mean the same thing to every country at every time, and not all liberalisation projects have the same effects. Spain's internationalisation led to different structural transformations than Mexico's.

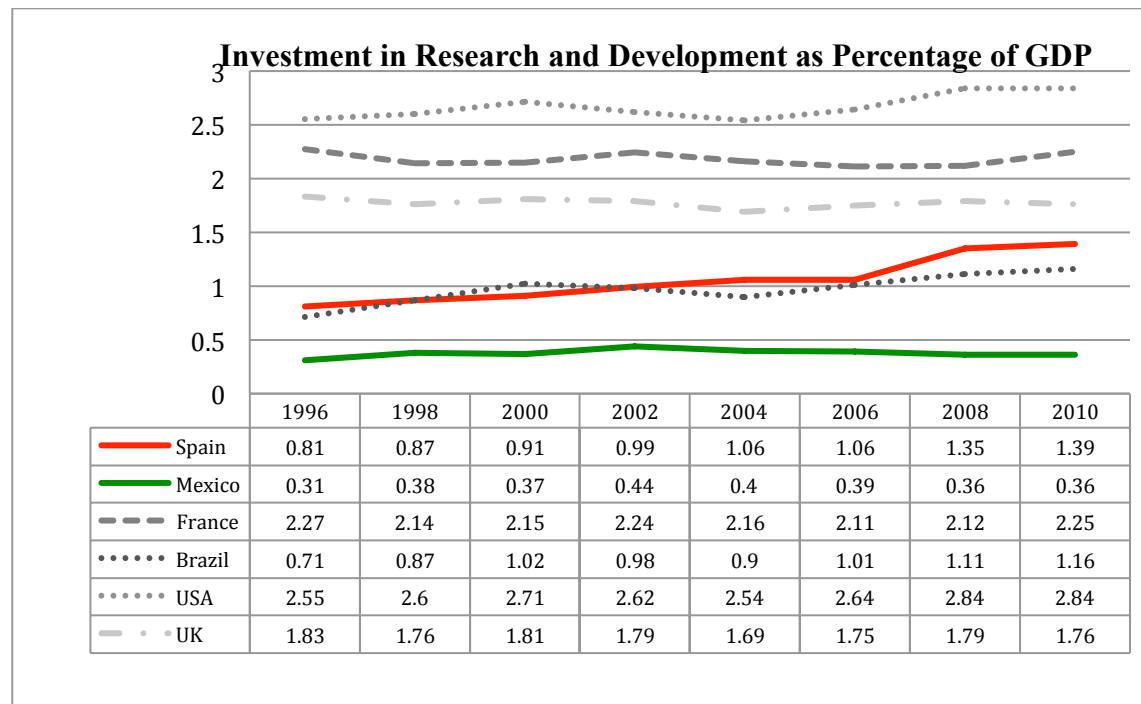


Figure 4.7. Percentage of GDP invested in R&D. Data from The World Bank DataBank.

The simple truth is that NAFTA's supposed 'achievements' are not even close to the expectations that preceded the signing of the treaty; or, even more problematic, this 'success' cannot be compared to the economic transformations achieved by Spain during the 1980s and early 1990s. Although in mere nominal terms the Spanish and Mexican economies presented a similar growth rate in the decade following accession into the Common Market and NAFTA, respectively – Spain averaged a 3.01 per cent rate whilst the Mexican economy grew at 2.76 per cent average (figure 4.8) – we have to consider that by then Spain had already started to experience important demographic changes that brought Spanish society closer to European medians. By 1986 Spain's net rate of population increase was just over 0.3 per cent (compared to 0.23 per cent in the UK and 0.57 per cent in France) whilst Mexico's population grew 1.73 per cent in 1994 – almost eight times faster than Spain's population increase in 1986. Similarly, 36.3 per cent of Mexico's population was 15 years old or younger in 1994, compared to 22.7 per cent in Spain in 1986. Thus demographics not only had an impact on the evolution of the two country's GDP per capita growth (figure 4.9), but also on the raising of standards of living. The accelerated rate of population growth in Mexico together with the comparative youth of the nation means that Mexico's economy should 'expand at an average annual rate of at least 5-6 per cent in real terms just to create sufficient jobs' (Moreno-Brid *et al.*, 2005: 1113). This simple look at demographics does not even deal with the issue of wealth distribution; in 2005, ten years after the implementation of NAFTA, more than 40 per cent of the national income was shared among less than ten per cent of the country's population. In a similar way, in the same year the poorest 20 per cent of the country shared less than four per cent of the income (World Bank DataBank, 2013d). Whilst in 2005 Mexico's ratio of total income received by the 20 per cent of the population with the highest income, to that received by the 20 per cent of the

population with the lowest income (this is defined as the 'income quintile share ration' by the European Commission) was 6.59, this figure was 4.3 in Spain. Although Spain still had one of the highest ratios of inequality in Europe, its inequality indicators are still considerably better than Mexico's. Indeed, concerns regarding the negative effects economic liberalisation could have had on the democratic prospects of Mexico were grounded on the fear that economic liberalisation could further strain 'the already-strained social compact between rulers and ruled', thus encouraging 'authoritarian rather than liberal politics' (Knight, 1992: 136). The new economic model may have, in fact, 'undermined social structures and organisational networks that had sustained pro-democracy mobilisations in earlier periods' (Middlebrook, 2004: 7), thus limiting rather than expanding the share of the society with a possibility of influencing political outcomes. Regardless of how unfair the comparison may be it is clear that, as far as economic gains go, NAFTA could have done far better.

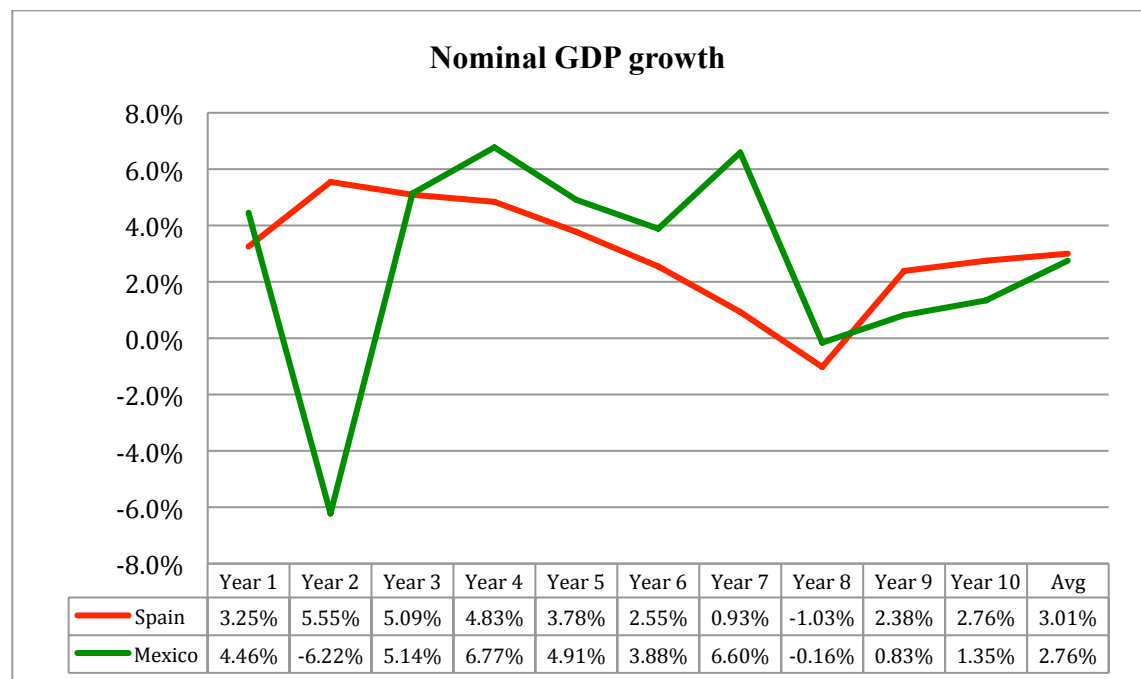


Figure 4.8. Nominal GDP growth in Spain (from 1986 to 1995) and Mexico (from 1994 to 2003). Data from The World Bank DataBank.

The case of Mexico, at best, elucidates how economic growth can have an impact on the end of authoritarianism but it is not enough to predict full democratisation or indeed the quality of the democracy; Mexico's income was relatively high since the mid 1970s (when GDP per capita reached \$4,500) but the highly institutionalised nature of the regime combined with an international context that favoured stability over reform, helped the regime survive until the year 2000 (when GDP per capita was close to \$8,500) (Magaloni, 2005). Hence, beside it being hard to establish the degree of influence NAFTA had in Mexico's economic development, it is even harder to see how, from a narrow modernisation theory perspective, the feeble economic growth in Mexico during the years following the implementation of NAFTA could have had any impact on the transformation of Mexico's political system. It makes far more sense to

analyse how other transformations to Mexico's economic system that were carried out as part of its project of internationalisation may have influenced political change.

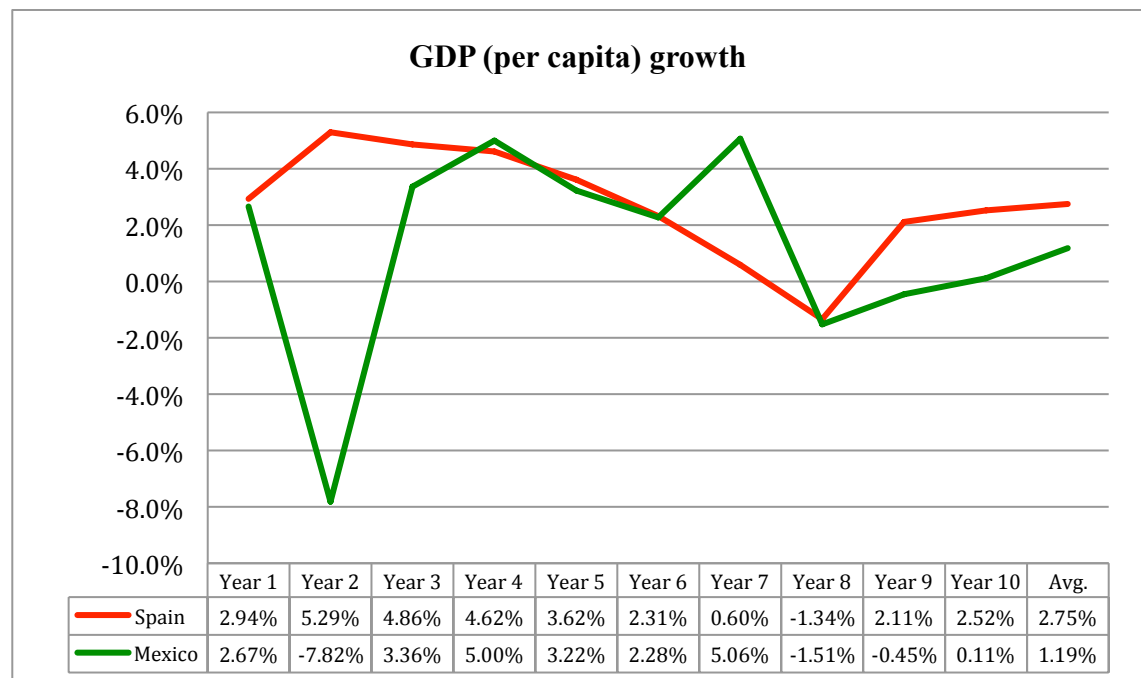


Figure 4.9. GDP per capita growth in Spain (from 1986 to 1995) and Mexico (from 1994 to 2003). Data from The World Bank DataBank.

One such argument is that NAFTA allowed the PRI technocrats to contemplate political accountability without fearing economic collapse. The idea being that, under a centralised economy, the PRI had to be in control of the economy and politics; once the PRI rendered the control of the economy to the forces of the market, it could allow for political reform without the fear of an economic meltdown. However, despite Salinas' claims to the contrary – in a somewhat bizarre argument, Salinas defines his presidency as a 'Social Liberalism' that was later discredited by the negative propaganda of the 'neoliberals' and the 'neopopulists' after the Peso Crisis of 1995 (Salinas de Gortari, 2010: 158-160) – 'there is little evidence that [NAFTA's initiator] intended to fully democratise Mexico' (Cameron and Wise, 2004: 304). Regardless of his intentions though, signing NAFTA did mean that the PRI rendered control of the economy for good.

As explained in great detail in the previous chapter, NAFTA did imply a whole set of economic reforms that led to a reduction of the size of the state; and as the state got smaller, the ability of the PRI to use official resources to deal with social issues diminished (Levy and Bruhn, 2006; Middlebrook, 2004). Certainly the shrinking of the state started before NAFTA came into effect and was, to a great extent, the consequence of the devastating budget crisis that accompanied de la Madrid's presidency. However, a clear consequence of NAFTA – similar to the effect Europeanisation had on Spain's economic system – is that the move towards neoliberalism became permanent; it was no longer a matter of need but a political and ideological choice that

would be impossible or at least incredibly costly to reverse. NAFTA, then, made it 'more difficult to revert to trade protectionism' and also established 'mechanisms that firmly safeguarded the property rights of foreign investors' (Haber *et al.*, 2008: 16). Thus, besides hurting the PRI's capacity to deal with every problem in a vertical, highly hierarchical manner, NAFTA introduced a whole new socioeconomic rhetoric in which populism – or arbitrary expropriation – had no place. Even when the regime introduced its Programa Nacional de Solidaridad (PRONASOL), it was unable to reap the usual rewards of direct patronage, as the PRI local caciques were bypassed (Levy and Bruhn, 1995: 182). NAFTA hurt the clientilistic network of the PRI as it made the regime's intervention with market forces implausible. It would be naïve to believe, however, that the Salinas administration did not anticipate this development.

The view that Salinas' intention was to democratise Mexico but that he was – having learnt the lessons from the Soviet Union – delaying political reform only in order to consolidate its economic reforms (Dresser, 1996: 320), does not survive the benefit of hindsight. Indeed, it seems likelier that the Salinas administration saw the reduction of the state as a side effect, and intended to use NAFTA to buy some time and slow down political reforms. The plan was simple: as NAFTA brought prosperity, the PRI would regain the confidence of the electorate; once the electorate was convinced that the PRI was the only party capable of running the economy, the old regime could use fear of economic collapse as an argument against political reform. What is more, the PRI regime correctly calculated that signing NAFTA would gain them 'credibility' in the United States. As Mexico slowly became the darling of the markets, the regime could 'indulge' in some of its typical anti-democratic practices without fear of international retaliation; NAFTA would, according to its critics, 'provide a ready source of foreign exchange to sustain the ruling party's expensive web of patronage' (Cameron and Wise, 2004: 305). According to different estimates, anything between 150 (Eisenstadt, 2004: 121-122) to 300 (Magaloni, 2005: 131) activists from the leftist and anti-NAFTA PRD were lost to 'political violence' during the Salinas administration. The impressive recovery of the PRI in the federal elections of 1991 (obtaining 58.66 per cent of the votes for Senators and 58.47 per cent of the votes for simple majority Representatives) and the presidential elections of 1994 (gaining 48.7 per cent of the vote against the PAN's 25.9 per cent) suggests that things were going according to plan. The sudden and 'unexpected' Peso devaluation of December 1994 changed everything. When the 1995 crisis hit, the hopes of the PRI to remain in control vanished almost as quickly as the value of the Mexican Peso. Suddenly, besides applying pressure on the PRI's anti-democratic networks, NAFTA's failure to deliver the grossly exaggerated results the PRI had promised led to a sudden loss of confidence in the regime.

‘As consumer debt exploded in 1995 and purchasing power collapsed under a 30 per cent real adjustment of the peso, the Salinas team’s opportunism in delaying adjustment and spurring growth through politically motivated election-year spending would haunt the ruling party for the remainder of the decade’ (Cameron and Wise, 2004: 316).

Indeed, as vast sectors of society lost confidence in the PRI’s ability to handle the economy, political liberalisation became a real possibility. The 1996 electoral reform was the first to be introduced at a time when the PRI could not have calculated it was in a position to win the elections (Magaloni, 2005: 135). As it turned out, as well as losing the race for Mexico City’s first elected mayor, the PRI lost control of Congress for the first time in the 1997 elections. What is more, national surveys indicate that the economy was a primary concern for the Mexican electorate coming into the 2000 elections; whilst in 1993 51.8 per cent had a favourable view of Salinas’ management of the economy, by 2000 only 16 per cent of the interviewees thought Ernesto Zedillo, Salinas’ successor, had improved economic conditions (Durand Ponte, 2004: 275). Although there is little evidence to suggest NAFTA directly contributed to the crisis, there is little doubt that the expectations created by the PRI were contradicted by the devastating effect of the 1995 crisis. At the same time, evidence suggests that the Mexicans’ rejection of the PRI’s management of the economy was not related to a rejection of NAFTA or the market reforms; even though less than 20 per cent of the population thought the economic situation of the country was positive in the year 2000, over 52.3 per cent of Mexicans still regarded free trade and a market economy as the best system for Mexico (Latinobarometro, 2000). Whilst NAFTA and market reforms remained mostly on positive terms, the failure of the PRI to deliver on its own exaggerated promises partly prompted the electoral collapse of the party.

4.4. Conclusions

This chapter has analysed the key question of the relationship between economic development and democratisation. Since, whether we like it or not, modernisation theory has dominated the study of democratisation in the last few decades, it was essential to tackle this question. However, as is usually the case with small-n research (Landman, 1999), the correlation proposed by modernisation theory is far from clear in the two case studies. Even more importantly, it is unclear how much of an impact internationalisation may have had in the economic development of both nations. Whilst it seems likely the process of European integration may have had a more positive – or at least less negative – impact on the Spanish economy (if nothing else through the great amount of development aid that went into Spain) than the case of NAFTA, the results remain inconclusive. Having said that though, some basic indicators seem to support the idea that, if we adhere to a broader understanding of

modernisation theory, the process of European integration was more supportive of the right type of overarching structural transformations in Spain (i.e. the one that leads to democracy), than NAFTA was in Mexico. At the same time, NAFTA's main influence in the democratisation of the country – from a perspective of economic development that is – probably had more to do with its failure to deliver the high expectations, both home and abroad, of 'a second Mexican miracle' that would match the achievements of the 'so-called miracle of the 1950s and 1960s' (Golob, 1997: 96). A comparison with other middle-income liberalising economies of the time shows that the supposed comparative advantages of NAFTA never materialised; 'the average annual rate of GDP per capita growth of the fourteen other middle-income liberalisers was 2.1 per cent over the 1994-2005 period, compared with 1.3 per cent in Mexico' (Haber *et al.*, 2008: 81). That the PRI went from being perceived as the party 'that could best manage the economy' to being seen as 'a major source of the country's economic difficulties' (Magaloni, 2005: 144) may have been, at least in part, an indirect consequence of NAFTA, but it cannot really be counted as one of NAFTA's 'successes'.

This thesis does not follow modernisation paradigms of democratisation though. Indeed, I pretend to challenge the 'conventional, neo-liberal view of transition' that sees it as a 'relatively unproblematic implementation of a set of policies including economic liberalisation and marketisation alongside democratisation, enabling the creation of a market economy and a liberal polity' (Pickles and Smith, 1998: 2). The next chapters will continue with this analysis of democratisation that sees it as far more than the establishment of 'elections and markets'. Certainly socioeconomic development can play a key role in transitions, and hence the analysis of how internationalisation impacted the economic system was necessary. The next chapters, however, will focus on how internationalisation interacted with democratisation by influencing elite behaviour, societal values and specific institutions in both countries.

CHAPTER V. Analysing Linkage and Leverage: The Elites, the International Dimension and the Europe's Democratic Conditionality

This chapter will focus on the first side of what is usually understood as two contradictory views of how democratisation evolves. As was discussed in the second chapter, classic approaches to democratisation have tended to see it, broadly speaking, as a process either from above (elite-driven theories) or from below (culturalist explanations and modernisation). This chapter will thus deal with the former. The main premises of the elite-driven/institutionalist approach have already been discussed in detail in the previous chapters, so the specificities of the approach will not be discussed here again. This chapter will instead look at the specific ways in which the processes of internationalisation in Spain and Mexico influenced the calculations of the elites, and the way in which this happened. At the same time, although some of the most common models of transition (as analysed in the second chapter) recognise the international context as part of their conditioning variables, most of them assume its influence rather than adequately incorporate it into their theoretical framework (Pridham, 1991: 5). This may explain why, for example, Huntington's famous model of transition (1991) – much as Inglehart and Welzel's (2005) model – only considers the international context as a potential barrier to democratisation rather than an explanatory variable in itself. More than a whim, however, this tendency to ignore international consideration is based on an old disciplinary division between comparative politics and international relations (Pridham, 1991: 2). Both disciplines have tended to zealously guard their areas of influence. This chapter will, thus, cut between this theoretical division and incorporate both disciplines into the analysis.

There is no doubt that 'while the salience of the international context of democratic transitions may [...] be easily recognised, analysing its real impact or influence on this process is no easy task either theoretically or empirically' (*ibid*). In fact, a thorough analysis of the international aspects of democratisation – especially if we are dealing with what has been referred to as its 'consolidation' stage – requires the analysis of multiple variables and actors. Such an analysis goes beyond a broad consideration of the international dimension of democratisation as 'contagion' – i.e. democracy seen as a 'virus' and proximity as the main explanatory variable (Whitehead, 1996: 5-8) – or as 'control' dynamics – i.e. the role that the 'strategies of regulation and control adopted by the dominant states in the system' play in imposing, promoting or encouraging democracy. A comprehensive account 'would need to incorporate the actions and intentions of relevant domestic groupings, and interactions between internal and international processes' (*ibid*: 15). In such an approach it becomes 'necessary to work with intricate and elusive patterns of strategic interactions which differ subtly from one case to the next' (*ibid*: 32). If on top of this we consider that for the better part of the last thirty years causality has dominated the study of democratisation – and comparative politics more broadly – and that, as

such, models that did not recognise a clear causal flow were considered inadequate, then it is no surprise that 'students of democratisation have tended to concentrate on the internal dynamics of institution-building and mutual accommodation [i.e. pacts], regarding the international component of the generation of consent as generally secondary in importance' (*ibid*).

Although, as discussed in the second chapter, this dynamic has recently changed, the difficulties of analysing the international context in transitions to democracy remain the same. As said a few times before, Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way's (2005 and 2010) approach to linkage and leverage in transitions to democracy has presented a novel way of dealing with the international aspect of democratisation. Although this approach does not eliminate all of the theoretical and empirical problems Geoffrey Pridham referred to back in 1991, it does help us elaborate more systematic comparison between cases. This chapter, then, will use Levitsky and Way's model¹, complemented with Pridham's own work in linkage politics, to analyse how European and North American integration interacted with the processes of democratisation in Spain and Mexico respectively. This approach can also be broadly divided between the influence on the elites (leverage) and the influence on the general population and social organisations (to be analysed in the next chapter). As such, this chapter will deal with the role of international leverage (or the lack of it) and the elites in the transitions of Spain and Mexico. It is indeed one of the main (if not the main) objectives of this thesis to explain how the fact that the United States perplexing refusal to apply any sort of leverage on the PRI regime to democratise – despite the high-levels of linkage that characterised the period around the signing and implementation of NAFTA – had a clear impact on Mexico's transition to democracy. Notwithstanding the signing of NAFTA and a wider process of integration with the United States, which invariably increased its linkage to the US and, consequently, the leverage potential of the United States over the Mexican elites, the process of internationalisation in Mexico failed to deliver on its democratising potential. At the completely opposite end of the spectrum was Spain, as its transition to democracy evolved in an international context in which leverage was consistently applied as its linkage to Western Europe developed; accession into the Common Market was an incentive to democratise and a source of resources for the democratic forces in Spain to utilise. Or to paraphrase Dimitrova and Pridham (2004: 99), the EU was not afraid of using strong conditionality as the stick and the prospect of membership (and the due access to assistance this entails) as the carrot.

5.1. A Note on elites and their role in democracy

¹ Albeit designed with competitive authoritarian regimes in mind (such as Mexico), it can still explain to an extent the dynamics between the domestic and the international during the transition in Spain.

Before continuing with the empirical analysis of my case studies, I believe it is important, though, to discuss the different roles that different theories attribute to elites during transitions to democracy. Although I already briefly discussed elite-driven theories of democracy, I believe it is necessary to discuss elites in their own right simply because even culturalist or institutional theories (i.e. those that do not place a causal correlation between elite pacts and successful democratisation) often refer to elites (or the role of leadership) as independent actors in democratisation processes. The role that elites play in transitions to democracy is such a central issue that even typologies of democratisation processes have been constructed based solely on the issue². At the same time, unlike institutions or society in general (i.e. the citizenry), elites are not always easy to define, identify or categorise. In his classic work on elites in the United States, C. Wright Mills (1956, [2000]: 11), for instance, refers to the elite as a 'more or less compact social and psychological entity' who have become 'self-conscious members of a social class' and who 'behave toward each other differently from the way they do toward members of other classes'. Mills claims that the members of this elite are not only self-conscious but that they also 'accept each other, understand one another, marry one another, tend to work and to think if not together at least alike'. For Mills and other theorists of elitism, the elites are more than just the 'people who are able, through their position in a powerful organisation, to affect national political outcomes individually, regularly and seriously' (Burton and Higley, 1987: 296). The elite is self-conscious and also self-serving; although they may be unaware of the power they actually have or be uncertain about their actual role (Mills, 1956 [2000]: 4-5), 'elite variability' (i.e. its transformations) is independent of other social, economic or cultural forces (Burton and Higley, 1987: 296; Mosca, 1939). In short, classical elitists interpretations propose the notion that elites are groups that are in many ways independent from the rest of society; thus elite behaviour often acts as an independent variable.

Certainly there have been many challenges to this elitist understanding of democracy, mainly in the shape of pluralist interpretations (Dahl, 1961 and 1971), structuralist understandings of power (Lukes, 2005) and what can be described as postmodern interpretations of power (Foucault, 2000). Regardless, the idea that elites exist and that they operate in a different realm than the rest of us has survived the different challenges to the classical interpretations of power.

² It has been claimed that democratisations can be classified between 'responsive' and 'non-responsive'. According to this typology democratisation processes are always conducted by elites but they can either respond to mass pressures (i.e. responsive democracy) or they can initiate this process without there being any pressure from below (non-responsive). Non-responsive democratisations can happen when elites make a decision to democratise because they see it as beneficial to the country (*enlightened democratisation*), or because they decide to do so to take advantage of foreign aid/assistance (*opportunistic democratisation*), or they have no choice since democracy is imposed from abroad (*imposed democratisation*) (Welzel, 2009: 87-88).

This does not mean though that elites are, by any means, easily identifiable. Since elites do not have to actually use their power but merely have the possibility to use it, it is very hard to ascertain who is and who is not part of the elite. To say that national elites are built by the individuals who are 'capable, if they wish it, of making substantial political trouble for high officials' whilst avoiding being 'promptly repressed' (Field and Higley, 1973; in Burton and Higley 1987: 5) would imply that repression is always predictable. Repression however, is never certain and it depends as much on structural limitations as it does on individual decisions. In the case of Mexico, for instance, the PRI regime used repression only sporadically, and its use depended as much on the personality and ability of the President in turn to resolve conflicts (the President being something of a supreme leader) as on the wider context of structural limitations (e.g. the resources available, the size of the 'threat' or movement, the social sector represented and, as well, the international context). The violent repression of student protests on the watch of President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (and his successor Luis Echeverría who was Interior Minister at the time) in 1968, for example, was caused by the combination of the President's authoritarian style and a need to maintain order before the 1968 Olympic games in Mexico City. The infamous *Batallón Olimpia* – integrated by military troops from all over the country – had been created with the specific mission of maintaining order in the eve of the Olympic games. Members of this battalion allegedly infiltrated the student groups and were at the forefront of the violence on the 2nd October 1968. Some accounts claim that this battalion was charged with blocking the entrance points to a nearby building (the *Chihuahua* building) that could have been used as a refuge for the protestors once the repression began (Castillo *et al.*, 1980: 28-34).

Considering that up until that point repression was aimed at the guerrilla groups operating in the south of the country during the 1960s and 1970s, and that the organisers of the student movement did not know of the existence of the *Batallón Olimpia*, it would be fair to assume that they could have not calculated that they were indeed going to be the victims of the firmest of repressions. Urban mobilisations until then were usually controlled by a combination of co-opting the leadership and/or, in some cases, coercion but rarely ever with outright violent repression (the medics movement in 1964 and 1965 are other isolated examples). By all accounts it seems like the urban middle classes in Mexico City, and specifically the leadership of the student movement, felt that they could make 'substantial political trouble for high officials' without being 'promptly repressed'; it has been claimed that even the army itself had to be 'tricked' into believing it was being attacked by the demonstrators in order for them to open fire against the masses (Aguayo Quezada, 2010a: 73-84). Considering how effective the Tlatelolco massacre and other repressive strategies (culminating in the arrest of over 500 people related to the movement) (Poniatowska, 1971) were in preventing the growth of the student movement, one could assume that the participants in this movement were not expecting the level of violent repression. In that sense, the educated middle classes and, more importantly, the

leaders of the largest university in Latin America (*Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* – UNAM) may have considered themselves – and indeed be considered by others – as part of the ‘elite’ only to find out the hard way that they were far from it. Most likely the leaders of the student movement would have created significant trouble for the regime escaping repression if this had happened at a different time (not so close to the Olympic Games when the eyes of the world would be on Mexico), under a different President (the Díaz Ordaz administration represented the highest point of the PRI’s authoritarian evolution) and framed in a different international context (in 1968 it was very easy to justify violence in front of the eyes of the international community with an anti-communist rhetoric). It was not until they took action and were promptly repressed that they realised just how far they actually were from being part of the ‘elite’. For this reason, then, when referring to the ‘elites’ in this chapter I will be referring to the elites in the narrower possible sense; high-ranking officials within the regimes and leaders of opposition parties. I will therefore not necessarily focus on trade union leaders, social movement leaders or the broader ‘business class’ simply because their classification as part of the negotiating elites is far from undisputed.

What is more, the process of defining the elites is increasingly problematic when dealing with regimes on transition to democracy since, as said before, transitions are characterised by high levels of uncertainty. Furthermore, the issue of definition and identification is just as challenging as establishing what part they play in transitions to democracy. As explained in the previous section, elite theorists and supporters of ‘pacted transitions’ claim that democratisation is a process that is invariably initiated and conducted by the elite(s). After all, if ‘a regime change is precisely a change of the rules of the game’ then, logically, ‘the game for changing the rules cannot entirely be shaped by the incentives structured by the rules being changed’ (Colomer, 1995: 6). In other words, if all actors were entirely constrained by structural limitations change would not occur; there has to be some actors who are less constrained by structural factors, i.e. the elites. It is the decisions and actions of these actors what will dictate the outcome of the transition.

The Spanish transition is certainly one that has been explained repeatedly through this prism of elitism. Josep Colomer (1991 and 1995) has – borrowing some of Przeworski’s (1986: 50-56) theoretical framework and using O’Donnell’s distinction between ‘hard-liners’ and ‘soft liners’ among the ruling elite (O’Donnell and Schmitter, 1986: 15-16) – analysed the outcome of this transition using exclusively game-theory models and rationale. His argument is that democracy was not only conducted by the elites but it emerged as a direct result of their bargaining; the elites shaped the democratisation process not by reaching a consensus but by achieving their basic goals. This idea is backed by his claim that ‘in certain situations where various political actors interact, the winning alternative does not have the sincere and unanimous approval of

those who openly accept it', but rather that it is a 'mixed and varied result of the preferences of the different actors' (Colomer, 1995: 50). Hence the different political actors did not back the democratisation of Spain because they felt the pressure from below or even because they were themselves convinced by the virtues of democracy. The country safely transited to democracy simply because it was the only alternative most members of the elite could live with. Similarly, Nicos Poulantzas (1976) and Otto Holman (1995) offer explanations for the Spanish transition based on elite conflicts rather than a change in societal preferences or pressures from abroad. In their view, different preferences for different sources of capital (European or American) led to a division or conflict between the elites, which the authoritarian regime was unable to solve (Polunatzas, 1976: 29-30).

As ever, though, there are those who disagree completely with elite-driven explanations of transitions to democracy. Despite most democratisation scholars acknowledging that agency plays an important role in transitions to democracy, there are those who see elite behaviour as the result of structural or social constraints. As such, focusing on elites is, for lack of a better expression, a waste of time. Even the Spanish case, so often used to describe the paradigmatic nature of 'pacted' transitions, has been analysed from perspectives that question the common assumption that 'pacted/negotiated transitions' are more successful than revolutionary transitions. Laura Desfor Edles, for example, reminds us that it is not enough to say that 'elites reach agreements but we have to explain why they reach these agreements' (1995: 355-356). She goes on to praise elite-theory scholars (or 'pactmen' as she rather mischievously refers to them) for their attempts to 'correct "deterministic" structural paradigms by highlighting individual agency' but then criticises them for failing to put forward a non-deterministic explanation for transitions to democracy. If elites decide to negotiate based on their rational inclination towards utility maximisation, and not because structure limits their possibilities, then how can we explain failed transitions? Is it that elites in some countries are just not rational (*ibid*: 359-360)? Clearly we have to consider subjective explanations that cannot be explained by game models. The case of the PCE and its leader Santiago Carrillo, exemplify how elite actors do not always act 'rationally'; the failure of the PCE in the 1978 elections (receiving less than 10 per cent of the popular vote that translated into 19 seats in the lower chamber and one seat in the Senate) implies either a clear miscalculation by Carrillo or his reluctance to pursue his immediate objectives (electoral victory) at the expense of the feeble Spanish democracy. Either an error or a political decision not based on individual gains (i.e. the decision to support democracy implied losing the PCE's core supporters), Carrillo's decision to move the PCE closer to Eurocommunism could not have been predicted exclusively through the use of game models.

Furthermore, there is also something to be said about the supposed independence of the elite from the rest of society. There is an argument to be made that the national elites and their respective societies have to share certain characteristics of political culture. It is impossible to ignore that the general cognitive, affective and evaluative patterns of predisposition that shape political culture vary from society to society as well as from social segment to social segment (Eckstein, 1998: 792). In other words, even though elites may be able to act independently (in their capacity as self-conscious and self-serving groups) from the rest of society, they are still conditioned by the same orientations that shape society. Considering that 'actors do not respond directly to "situations" but respond to them through mediating "orientations"' (*ibid*: 790), the supposed 'independence' of the elite has to be seriously questioned. Can elites really take decisions that go against societal pressures? The distinction between the two groups is 'inherently blurred' since 'both elites and non-elites are part and parcel of the same historical "reality" or *drama*' (Edles, 1995: 370). Similarly, Inglehart and Welzel's work suggests that 'within a given country, the rich and the poor strata tend to have values that are more similar to each other than to citizens of other countries' (2005: 70), and that the values and attitudes of all segments of society tend to move in the same direction as socioeconomic development takes place (*ibid*: 58). Therefore, the idea that elites' preferences and actions are completely independent from the rest of society seems to lose its validity. The core values and attitudes of the elites remain closely linked to those of the wider society.

As a multicausal study of democratisation, this thesis does not support the idea that elite pacts (and the resulting institutional arrangement) are at the fore of a causal correlation. At the same time, however, I do not agree with strict culturalist or modernisation explanations that almost completely ignore the role of agency in transition to democracy. Certainly there is very little doubt that adept leadership can, at the very least, smooth the transition from authoritarianism to democracy, but this is not to say that elite pacts can, by virtue of their own importance, sustain democracy. Colombia's and Venezuela's democracies during the second half of the last century, as seen in the previous chapter, followed the same 'pacted model' of transition in the 1950s, yet their respective democracies evolved very differently and now face challenges that emerged from these specific progressions (Bejarano, 2011: 18). In this new era of democratisation studies, context always matters. Thus, the widespread opinion during the 1980s that 'pacts endow democracies with healthy doses of stability' does not longer hold the sway it once did (*ibid*: 84-85). Higley and Burton's (1989) theory that the stability of a regime is a direct consequence of the 'unity' of its elites may help explain why some regimes are stable and some are not. It does not explain, however, why some regimes are authoritarian, democratic, or something in between. The fact is that whilst the existence of pacts may explain stability, it cannot in its own right explain regime type; during the bargaining stages, it is near impossible to gauge if a pact is democratic or undemocratic since this very much depends on the intentions of

the elites involved. In fact, the nature of the pacts – democratic or undemocratic – can only be known for certain after these have taken place, and even then it is not clear-cut. In order to establish if the pacts themselves are democratic one has to probe into the process of negotiation, interrogate the individuals involved in the negotiations, finding out ‘their motives and their capacity of representation’ as well as ‘analysing the institutional outcome of their negotiations’ (Bejarano, 2011: 85). It is almost impossible, then, for scholars to predict the true intentions or true capacities of representation of different elite groups during the bargaining stages. Nevertheless, a thorough analysis of the pacts themselves and the context in which they are negotiated (who is taking part in the negotiations and who is being left out, what is included in the bargaining and subsequent pacts, who has the upper hand, and how committed are the different elites to the project) can help explain – and even predict – the democratic evolution of a country.

I have already explained the particularities of Historical Institutionalism and Structured Contingency, and how, according to these approaches, institutional evolution places certain structural limitations to elite bargaining. Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way (2010: 82), for instance, unequivocally suggest that although ‘leadership obviously affects regime outcomes, particularly in the short run [...] leadership is less important than international and domestic structural variables’ in shaping regime trajectories. Unless we choose to believe that successful transitions are down to particularly skilled and ideologically committed individuals – thus accepting that a change of leadership would be enough to secure a democratic transition anywhere – we would have to admit that ‘leaders’ choices often are heavily structured by the domestic and international context in which they operate’ (*ibid*). The analysis in this thesis follows the general reservations to elite theory presented above. Democratisation cannot be understood as an exclusively top-down process in which elites (as defined before) act independently of societal pressures, or outside the confines of the orientations that condition the rest of the members of a specific society, or indeed unaffected by international pressures and tendencies. If that were the case, a comparison of the transitions to democracy in Spain and Mexico would have to focus primarily on the actors who shaped the process of democratisation. What is more, such a study would have to conclude that Mexico’s less successful transition – if compared to the Spanish case at least – was down to Carlos Salinas, Ernesto Zedillo, Vicente Fox and Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas simply being less apt and/or less committed to democracy than Adolfo Suárez, Felipe González or Santiago Carrillo. Or as Alan Knight put it: ‘whether horse or jockey is more important is an old racing conundrum, to which most experts would reply that although jockeys can certainly lose races (i.e. elites can squander post-revolutionary opportunities), it is horses, not jockeys, that win races’ (1992: 119).

Although this may very well be the case (nobody could claim with a straight face that Vicente Fox was shrewder or in any way a better politician than Suárez, González or Carrillo), such a study would hardly be worthy of a PhD thesis. Having said that though, the role that elites play in democratisation processes cannot be ignored and, in fact, has to be considered as part of any multi-level model (Diamond, Linz and Lipset, 1995; Linz and Lipset, 1996; Merkel, 1998). This chapter, thus, acknowledges the important role elites play in transitions to democracy but is also mindful of the limitations of elite-driven theories. Also, by analysing the influence of the international context – intensified under the conditions of internationalisation – I will be acknowledging the key role structural contingencies play in elite-level calculations. I thus claim that, although international considerations – I am focusing on leverage in this chapter – may not, by themselves, explain all of the elites decisions, I do claim that the international context plays an important part in shaping the transitions once they are set in motion. In the cases of Spain and Mexico, international leverage impacted the speed with which the respective transitions unfolded, which in turn helps explain the different outcomes of the democratisation processes in both countries.

5.2. When leverage complements linkage: the Spanish elites and democratic conditionality

Recent events in Spain deem it necessary to revisit the Spanish transition to democracy and to analyse it, with the benefit of hindsight, from a different perspective. As I have repeatedly tried to portray during this thesis, there is little doubt that, although not without its problems, the Spanish process of democratisation has been a success – or at the very least more successful than Mexico's. Back in the 1970s and 1980s the multi-level transition Spain was embarking on captured the imagination of Europe and the world; Spain went from being an international pariah and a European anomaly to being the European centre of attention. The core European countries were eager for the Spanish democratisation to succeed; unlike Portugal and Greece, Spain was a middle-sized country (circa 35 million people against the approximately 9 million in Greece and Portugal in 1975) whose integration into Europe could present bigger challenges but also bigger rewards. Moreover, the Spanish transition gave an external 'purpose' to the Community at a time when it was lagging impetus. During the final days of the Franco regime, frustrated with the lack of convincing reforms by the then President Arias Navarro, the EEC coordinated a fierce wave of hostility against the dictatorship. France and Germany were, at the time, particularly vociferous in their condemnation of the regime and their support for the opposition (Crespo MacLennan, 2004: 149-151); the German social democrats, the eurocommunist groups and the Socialist International were especially active in supporting the opposition to the Franco regime (*ibid*: 178), and as the leftist leaders in exile were 'exposed' to these moderate left-wing philosophies the Spanish left 'underwent a process of "renovation"' (Encarnación, 2008: 51). Even in Britain, despite 'limited recognition', condemnation to the

regime – amplified by the question of Gibraltar – was widespread (Portero, 1999: 224-226). Only the United States remained oddly detached from the situation and seemed not to offer either support for the regime or for the reformist forces. It was in this atmosphere of European pro-democratic euphoria that the Spanish transition to democracy was achieved. This sense of ‘euphoria’ helps us explain why the earlier studies of the Spanish transition were, with the benefit of hindsight, clearly too optimistic about the prospects for Spain’s democracy; scholars and commentators alike tended to ignore some the negative aspects of the transition (such as the clearly uncertain and sometimes contradictory provisions present in the 1978 Constitution), whilst talk of a ‘Spanish model’ – based on elite settlements and consensual politics – became common practice amongst many political scientists (Edles, 1998: 6). The fact that the Spanish democratisation process has not been as trouble-free (or indeed as ‘consolidated’) as previously thought, however, should not undermine the achievements of what was, by almost any standards, a successful process.

With this in mind, we can analyse the role Europe played in the democratisation of Spain. The Spanish period of transition – let us say from the assassination by ETA of Franco’s chosen successor, Admiral Luis Carrero Blanco, in December 1973 until the ratification of the Constitution in December 1978 – coincided with a period of rapprochement between President Giscard d’Estaing of France and Chancellor Helmut Schmidt of Germany, which ‘followed up by the decision in 1976 to hold direct elections to the European Parliament [with the first elections held in 1979], further reduced the distinction between domestic and foreign policies in European countries’ (Story and Pollack, 1991: 141). Although the troublesome 1960s – characterised by De Gaulle’s attempts (such as the ‘Empty Chair Crisis’ of 1965) to steer the Community away from the use of qualified majority voting in the Council and overall supranationalism (Vanke, 2006: 141-142) – had slowed down the federalist impetus of European integration, it was the eventual accession of Great Britain in 1973 that decisively set the Community on an intergovernmental path. Intergovernmentalism, let us be clear, did not imply a move away from a multilateral approach, but rather a move away from supranationalism. In any case, this trend was not going to be significantly changed until, under the leadership of Jacques Delors, the SEA and the Treaty of Maastricht were implemented in 1987 and 1993 respectively. Intergovernmentalism at European level, however, did not mean a halt in the development of linkages between the different European nations. As was discussed during the previous chapter, the 1960s and 1970s represented a period of increasing linkage between Spain and the rest of Europe. What is more, the trend towards intergovernmentalism during the early 1970s meant that ‘the bilateral dimension of intra-Community relations gained ground’ (Story and Pollack, 2006: 133). This, in turn, allowed Spain – and in particular its elites – to develop many bilateral links with a number of European nations that were to have a bearing

on its transition to democracy. These increasing bilateral linkages, as described in the previous chapter, were characterised by an increase in trade, investment, tourism and migration.

The path towards intergovernmentalism, then, allowed the regime to develop many bilateral linkages in different fronts and with a number of European nations bypassing the EEC. The obvious advantage of this approach was that it could be achieved without having to deal with the pesky issue of the regime's nondemocratic nature. At the same time, despite what the official line may have been, it was clear that the rejection of Spanish membership in 1963 and the subsequent signing of the PTA was considerably less than what the regime was hoping to achieve. As such, a policy of slow bilateral rehabilitation – spearheaded by increasingly close ties with the United States – allowed the regime to pursue a policy of internationalisation outside of the EEC. It was indeed American support that ensured Franco's regime was not completely isolated; by the early 1960s Spain was already a member of the UN, the IMF, the World Bank and the OECD (*ibid*: 128). Yet it was Spain's accession into Europe that was the ultimate goal. It was not until this goal was achieved that (much as Mexico's accession into NAFTA meant the end of its 'exceptionalism') a revision of the traditional interpretation of the history of Spain could take place; integration into Europe would change the image of Spain as a deviation from a 'European model' (Balfour and Preston, 1999: 1).

Achieving the regime's ultimate foreign policy objective, i.e. its inclusion into Western international organisations, was by no means an easy process nor was it beyond doubt. In fact, had it not been for a timely intervention (from Franco's perspective of course) by Churchill's second government, Franco's regime would have found itself far more isolated than it did. Churchill was quick to develop a new policy that backtracked on Atlee's ideologically grounded policy towards the Spanish regime, i.e. that Franco had to be punished for supporting the Axis – a view that was widely supported in France and the United States, and that was to define the stance of the exiled left-wing opposition to the regime. Churchill's assessment that Franco's regime was not necessarily 'crueller' than Stalin's or more 'arbitrary' than Salazar's led to a more lenient stance towards the regime. The fear was that – and Franco seemed to be well aware of this fear – an unstable Spain would only benefit the Soviet Union. Thus, although still opposing Franco, strong economic sanctions were avoided and the regime was able to ride the (rather tame) storm that was caused by diplomatic sanctions (Portero, 1999: 210-215). The combination of a pragmatic approach by Great Britain and the eventual acceptance in the United States that Spain had too much strategic value to be ignored or, worse, alienated (Liedtke, 1999: 233), led to the eventual rehabilitation of the regime.

Despite the increasingly comfortable position of the Franco regime in the international arena, Western Europe (France and Germany in particular) remained a safe haven for the regime's

main opposition. The unilateral decision by the post-war French provisional government to close its border with Spain for two years, suggests that it was indeed the French who, influenced by their own struggles to re-establish their democracy during the war, took the commitment of seeing a transformation in Spain more seriously than any of the other Western allies (Whitehead, 1986: 13). Although this initial commitment may have been overwhelmed by Cold War mentality, France remained the most important centre from where the opposition in exile worked. Although very much irrelevant as an opposition force from the 1950s onwards, the Republican Government in exile settled in Paris in 1945, after a short stay in Mexico City, and continued with its operations there until its dissolution in 1977. Santiago Carrillo, the leader of the PCE, was also exiled in Paris from the end of the Civil War until his arrest in Spain in 1976; and it was primarily from France (and Portugal) that the PCE decided to coordinate its internal opposition to Francoism, which was very much characterised, in the earlier stages, by a guerrilla approach that looked to destabilise the regime (Tusell, 2005: 79). France was also the base from where the exiled PSOE, under the leadership of Rodolfo Llopis and the key assistance of former leader Indalecio Prieto – himself exiled in Mexico – started to develop its opposition strategies. It was at these early stages of the struggle that the Socialists chose an opposition strategy based almost entirely on external pressure to achieve the eventual transition to democracy (*ibid*: 75). What is more, once the process of European integration was set in motion, ‘Europe’ as a concept became an essential part of the political culture of the exiled opposition (Crespo MacLennan, 2004: 54). The fact that Europe remained determined to exclude Spain from the process of integration based on the very existence of the Franco regime was more than mere political ammunition for the opposition; Europeanism became an essential part of the political ideology of the opposition forces based in Europe (*ibid*).

The Franco regime, thus, faced an even more challenging version of the dilemma so often faced by authoritarian regimes elsewhere: how to limit political liberalisation and the influence of opposition forces abroad, without necessarily limiting economic liberalisation or jeopardising the access to international markets and/or investment. After all, the regime’s main goal was survival. Thus, as has often been the case in third wave transitions, the Franco regime’s change of policy direction towards economic liberalisation was ‘invariably made under some form of compulsion’ and was also a ‘defensive’ strategy that looked to maintain ‘(vulnerable) regime legitimacy’ (Pridham, 1991: 14). The regime, therefore, needed liberalisation to boost its legitimacy as a modernising force in Spain, but it also desperately wanted to limit the influence international actors (be they foreign governments, opposition forces abroad or international organisations) could have in domestic affairs. Again as in many other cases, this conscious attempt by the regime to promote yet also limit international linkages makes it very hard, if not impossible, to establish any sort of causality between the actions of international actors and domestic developments. If on top of this common – but by no means easy to deconstruct –

objective of authoritarian regimes of limiting the effects of liberalisation and internationalisation on the domestic political system, we consider that more often than not 'official declarations in favour of democracy in the abstract' by democratic countries correlate 'poorly with observable behaviour affecting specific interests and international relationships' (Whitehead, 1986: 7), then we are left with a real problem when trying to analyse the influence of the international on domestic transitions.

The case of Spain, however, is different. At elite level, at least, it is easier to identify the influence of the international context by looking at how the actions of domestic actors were constrained by international influences and conditions. At this point I should note that I am consciously referring to influence rather than power simply because, as Pridham reminds us (1991: 9), domestic actors during the earlier stages of liberalisation – more so than during the transition stage itself – 'possess a substantial degree of autonomy'. In any case, when the balance of power between domestic actors is finely poised – as it was in Spain during the very early stages of the transition (Colomer, 1995: 9) – influence rather than power is all it takes; in times of high uncertainty such as transitions to democracy (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986:3-5), secondary considerations such as the international context can lead to significant differences in the outcome of the process. In the case of Spain, then, the early liberalisation stage not only helped develop specific linkages at various levels, but it was also a learning curve for Spanish elites. After this initial period it was clear that, although more often than not declarations in favour of democracy do not correlate to the actions taken by foreign democratic governments, the EEC's assertion that Spain had to democratise in order to be considered for membership, was one of those rare occasions when official statements actually had 'considerable practical force' (Whitehead, 1986: 7). The Francoist elites had to learn the hard way – by having the regime's attempts to open negotiations with the EEC dismissed outright – that Europe's support for democracy was, unlike NATO or the UN, more than mere rhetoric. When the letter sent in February 1962 by the Spanish Foreign Minister, Fernando María Castiella, to Walter Hallstein, the President of the EEC Commission, asking for the opening of accession negotiations was merely acknowledged rather than properly replied to (Royo and Manuel, 2003: 6-7), the regime's elites got the clearest indication possible that the EEC would not accept a non-democratic country in its ranks.

Although some hope remained that Franco's Spain would eventually reach some sort of association status, occurrences such as the one just described must have helped transform some 'hard liners' into 'soft liners'. Certainly the EEC rejection did not change the views of the 'bunker', i.e. those who rejected viscerally 'the "cancers" and "disorders" of democracy' (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986: 16). But the strong rejection of the EEC must have convinced some of the more pragmatist supporters of Francoism that the very 'regime they helped to

implant' would 'have to make use, in the foreseeable future, of some degree or some form of electoral legitimisation' (*ibid*), thus becoming 'soft liners' reformers rather than staunch *Franquistas*. Similarly, although the regime's attempts to get involved in the process of European integration never gained traction, the mere fact that the regime showed an interest in accessing the EEC meant a change in policy. From then on the regime's elites and its ministers started to publicly recognise the key role Europe would play in Spain's development and were increasingly positive about Spain's role in the new Europe (Crespo MacLennan, 2004: 47). This change in policy helped moderate, at least in public, some of the more radical views of some sectors of the regime's elites. Those who remained suspicious of the process of European integration were either removed or were not allowed to express their views openly.

What is more, there is little doubt that the regime's change in stance towards the EEC provided the exiled opposition with a much-needed common discourse. The opposition based outside Spain had long been suffering from a lack of resources, a lack of support caused by Cold War calculations, and an increasingly divisive rift between different opposition groups and between the domestic and the international oppositions (Aguilar, 2000: 303). The process of increasing approximation with Europe (i.e. the furthering of linkages) offered the opposition and the regime a common political objective, albeit for completely different reasons. Whilst the regime pretended to gain legitimacy by benefiting from Europe's economic boom, the opposition saw increasing cooperation with Europe as an opportunity to highlight the incompatibility between the regime and the EEC, and also as an opportunity to strengthen its voice inside Spain. Santiago Carrillo's very public acceptance of Eurocommunism, for instance, signified the definitive end to the PCE's relationship with Moscow, and made the PCE's pro-European stance 'official'.

Although, there is a debate surrounding the reasons Carrillo had for embracing Eurocommunism, there is no doubt that this change in policy was a key factor in the transition. This shift in stance – according to Carrillo himself the communists were the first ones to 'bury the axe of war' – paved the way for the spirit of national reconciliation that was to characterise the transition (Edles, 1998: 44). The Suárez government desperately needed to limit the social mobilisations that could threaten the reforms by giving the 'bunker' an excuse to use repression, and thus needed the PCE, with its historical ties with the trade unions (in particular the *Comisiones Obreras* – CCOO), to 'induce moderation' amongst the ranks (Encarnación, 2001: 76-77). On the other hand, Carrillo needed to be legalised in order to be able to participate in any future electoral process. Thus Carrillo and the Communists had no choice but to moderate their stance as part of a bargaining process with Adolfo Suárez's government, i.e. abandoning *ruptura* was the only way to gain legal status (Colomer, 1995: 68-77). The PCE's electoral failure in the 1977 elections – receiving less than 10 per cent of the votes – would imply that, if

it was merely an electoral and self-serving strategy, Carrillo made a big mistake when reading the public sentiment; it was the embracement of Eurocommunism, after all, that had pushed many of the PCE's core supporters to abandon the party. An alternative interpretation, however, is that Carrillo's views had been actually moderated after spending forty years exiled in Paris and that he decided to move his party towards that line rather than the other way around (Edles, 1995: 370-372). Carrillo knew he would lose electoral support but was personally committed to the democratisation of the country and Spain's eventual integration into Europe.

Probably the best example of Europe's influential role in bringing together the different opposition forces, and thus moderating the views of conflicting factions, undoubtedly relates to the meeting that took place in Munich in June of 1962. On the eve of the Europeanist Congress, a large group of Spanish 'delegates' representing the majority of Spanish opposition forces (except for the Communists), both domestic and in exile, got together with the objective of discussing the prospects for democracy and accession into Europe. In Munich there were socialists, liberals and Christian democrats, as well as republicans and monarchists, Basque and Catalan nationalists, and individuals who had fought against each other during the Civil War. Yet they all shared two very basic goals: the democratisation of Spain and its integration with Europe (Alvárez de Miranda, 2003: 101). Although there were, of course, resentments between the different factions participating, these two common goals were what, according to one of the participants, united the individuals present and made consensus possible (*El País* 9/6/2012). The meeting in Munich was condemned by the regime, and portrayed by the loyal media outlets as a 'betrayal of Spain' (*ABC* 10/6/1962a), a 'farce' that was not representative of Spaniards' views and even called the meeting a 'New Munich Agreement' (*ABC* 10/6/1962b) (making allusion to the Munich Agreement of 1938 between Nazi Germany and the European powers). The regime's police forces were quick in arresting and/or detaining some of the delegates that had travelled from Spain. Some, like the Christian democrat Fernando Alvárez de Miranda and the monarchist Joaquín Satrústegi, were forced to spend a year of banishment in the Canary Islands, whilst others, such as Carmelo Cembrero, chose exile in other European countries (*El País* 9/6/2012) – finding work in the ECSC and then the EEC. Many more of the participants lost their jobs, whilst the police harassed nearly all of them. This exaggerated reaction, besides being a misguided show of strength by the regime, had the very negative effect of straining Spain's relationships with the EEC in general, and France and Germany in particular. Whatever chances Franco's regime may have had of ever being allowed accession into the EEC were extinguished right then (Alvárez de Miranda, 2003: 101-108).

More than the obviously important logistic support given by the different European nations (e.g. facilitating travel to the Congress) or the fierce criticism that was aimed at the regime afterwards, the role the 'idea of Europe' played as a unifying force during, before and after the

Congress is, in my view, just as relevant. In essence, we could say that the process of Spain integrating with Western Europe (in the first instance with the development of informal linkages and then by the process of institutionalising these linkages) 'shaped' rather than 'made' the democratisation process. It would be a great leap to say that there is a direct causal link from integration to democratisation – at least at elite level – but we could say that Europe was a platform, a reinforcing example and an important source of consensus. After all, regardless of how we choose to explain the transition to democracy in Spain, there is no doubt that consensus took precedence over confrontation. I am not denying of course that 'the process of European integration interacted with a wide variety of domestic political and economic factors' (Fishman, 2003: 32), but I do, however, believe that, at elite level at least, the process of European integration considerably increased the prospect of pro-democracy pacts being reached, as well as providing a clear incentive for these pacts to be reached quickly.

There are other instances and analyses that support this view. Although there are those that believe that other than providing moral support to the democratic opposition, 'there was very little Europe could do' (Carr and Fusi, 1981: 214), there is enough evidence to suggest that Western European countries and the EEC, at the very least, played an active part in supporting democratic actors and, thus, influencing the elites' calculations. Even if we were to accept, however, that Europe could only provide moral support, we need to acknowledge that even this minimal influence may have had a significant impact on the calculations of key individuals. Raymond Carr and Juan Pablo Fusi acknowledge that, if nothing else for instance, King Juan Carlos, being the chosen successor of Franco after the assassination of Carrero Blanco, needed the legitimacy that could only be provided by the backing of other European nations. Western Europe, unlike the United States, was certainly not going to provide its full backing to Juan Carlos until he proved his democratic credentials. After all, the reformist agenda eventually pursued by the King was more or less a surprise; we must not forget that Franco himself handpicked the King as his successor (Gilmour, 1985). Indeed, Juan Carlos' first speech as King could hardly be described as an endorsement of political reform (Aguilar, 2000: 306-307), and his first attempt at forming a government, under the leadership of Carlos Arias Navarro, the last Prime Minister of the Franco era, did little to convince the domestic opposition or the international community that the King was a true democrat. The 'comedy of errors' that was Arias Navarro's government seemed like a half-hearted attempt to 'enact a few reforms, call the result a democracy, and hope for the best' (Gilmour, 1985: 141). It was also during these early stages of the transition that European pressure reached its highest level. Before then, there had always been disagreements around Europe over how to react to the imminent transformations in Spain; whilst the conservative forces advocated for moderation – following the policy devised by Churchill's government – the socialist left considered that ending the Franco regime was a 'European mission' that was long overdue. Ultimately, the disappointing reforms of Arias

Navarro, the King's apparent ambivalence towards reform and the worrying situation in Portugal tilted the balance in favour of those who advocated a stronger stance against Franco (Crespo MacLennan, 2008: 148-149).

How much of an influence did the barrage of European condemnation have on the King's 'sudden' decision to replace Arias Navarro with Adolfo Suárez, and embark on a far more comprehensive process of political reform, is impossible to know. Spain's romanticised version of its transition has long promoted the idea that Juan Carlos was never anything else than a staunch democrat. However, Juan Carlos had been directly appointed by Franco 'as the best guarantee for the continuation of the institutions and spirit of Francoism' (Carr and Fusi, 1981: 207). Franco believed that with the King on the throne the future of the regime was *bien atado* (tied down) (Bermeo and Gracia-Durán, 1994: 91), and Juan Carlos did not make his stance clear until his state visit to the United States in February 1976 when he described the Arias Navarro Government as an 'unmitigated disaster' (Aguilar, 2000: 308). If this was his strategy all along or a reaction to changing circumstances, we will probably never know for sure. I would argue, however, that we should assume that the King must have been influenced by pragmatism as much as by conviction. Juan Carlos was certainly aware of what was happening to his brother in law in Greece – where Constantine's failure to offer his unconditional support to Greece's attempts to establish a republican democracy at least partly led to the defeat of the monarchical alternative in the referendum of 1974 – and of the increasingly antagonistic stance of individual members of Europe towards authoritarian regimes in its periphery. The more or less generalised outrage in Europe that followed the execution of three communist and two ETA members in September 1975 was a clear indication that Europe was ready to take the gloves off. Although the executions went ahead, the regime was seriously damaged by the episode, and was even forced to defend itself after reports in the BBC suggested there was widespread rebellion in the Francoist ranks (*Informaciones*, 27/09/1975).

By this stage it was not only painstakingly clear that the EEC would not allow non-democratic countries to join its ranks, but also that the Community was going to be 'stricter' with Spanish democracy than with that of Greece or Portugal. As said before, concerns from several EEC member states – France in particular – regarding the very real challenges Spanish accession would bring to the newly established CAP were partly behind this intensified scrutiny, and it was a sobering fact already recognised by some at the time of the transition (Poulantzas, 1976: 29). But it is also true that Spanish isolation from Europe had been longer and deeper than that of Greece or Portugal. The Greek dictatorship lasted less than a decade and Salazar's *Estado Novo* was never entirely isolated because of its close relationship with Great Britain. Portugal's status as a historical ally of the British had even enabled Portugal to participate in the alternative British-led process of integration framed under the EFTA (Powell, 2007: 52). Spain's isolation

from Western European organisations had been total: despite the United States viewing the end of Franco's isolation positively, the regime found itself barred from participating in the Marshall Plan and NATO due mainly to French and British opposition (Portero, 1999: 223). As said before, the EEC also used the political conditions set in the 1961 Birkelbach Report as the main reason not to start accession negotiations with Franco; similarly the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly had already explicitly declared that only members of a freely elected Spanish Parliament under a constitutional regime would be eligible to participate as Representatives of the Assembly, thus effectively banning Spanish participation under Franco³ (Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, Resolution 15, 28/8/1950). All these meant that the Franco regime was excluded from any of the (primarily) European organisations.

This complete isolation was not only an embarrassment for the regime but also provided a strong symbolic statement for elites across the political spectrum. Once there was a consensus amongst the different elites that a transition to democracy was desirable, it became clear that only the clear recognition of the EEC – inherent in accepting Spain's participation in Europe – would be enough to legitimise the new Spanish democracy. By refusing to baulk on its democratic conditionality, the different European organisations (the Community and the Council of Europe) became the only judges with enough legitimacy to sanction the emerging democracy (Powell, 2007: 52-54). On the other hand, the eventual integration into Europe's main political and economic organisations – and the inherent process of Europeanisation this meant for Spain – was, particularly from the 1970s onwards, regarded as synonymous of modernisation (*ibid*: 53). Spain's 'chronic' underdevelopment – relative to Western Europe of course – remained the same 'problem' in 1975 as in 1898. By the time of Franco's death, however, it was widely accepted that Europe was indeed the solution. In the mid 1970s the influential magazine *Cambio 16* summarised this widespread view; the magazine believed that accession into Europe was more than a short-term solution for orange farmers and bicycle cranks producers, and called it an alternative way of modernisation (Díaz Dorronsoro, 2012: 64). Since modernisation was the ultimate goal and accession into Europe was regarded as synonymous with modernisation, there was not a single elite group that could afford to be seen as an obstacle to integration. This explains why all political parties and other leaders unanimously supported accession into Europe.

The influence of this strong consensus and the impact it had on the democratisation of the country should not be underestimated. Accession into the Community was for the elites at the helm of the transition an important incentive to democratise. The fact that the 'EEC was solidly democratic, and had "set up a stable pattern of rewards and disincentives" for would be

³ A point made even clearer when Greece was asked to withdraw from the Council in 1969 following the military coup.

members' (Linz and Stepan, 1996: 113) meant that the elites were very sensitive to European opinion. It was widely believed that Spain's international ostracism and inability to join European institutions was down to the Franco regime; the majority of the population regarded the EEC as a 'symbol of democracy and development' and the elites, wanting to benefit from the Community's reputation, understood joining the Common Market was a 'decisive step for the consolidation of democracy' (*ibid*). The fact is that Brussels had made it very clear that political reform was a *sin qua non* for integration; the elites knew it and, more importantly, so did the electorate. Whether or not this conditionality was a ploy is irrelevant. The fact is that Spanish elites believed that democracy was a condition for European integration, they also believed that integration was the only way to achieve the ultimate goal of 'modernising' Spain, and they acknowledged that only the EEC could give the emerging democratic regime the legitimacy it so badly needed. Given that the Spanish economy risked being left behind if Spain did not join the Common Market, and given that the vast majority of the population saw integration with Europe in a positive light (I will refer to this in the next chapter), elites from all sides of the political spectrum saw integration into Europe as essential. Europe's insistence on democracy, coupled with the elites' calculations of the costs of not joining, meant that the Spanish elites' sensitivity towards European opinion increased exponentially, thus the costs of repression or democratic regressions became higher with internationalisation. In other cases where political considerations have been completely ignored, regional integration does not necessarily improve democracy. The case of North American integration is often used to prove this point. The United States' silence on political conditionality and reluctance to pressure the Mexican elites, meant that the political elites in Mexico were comfortable engaging in less than democratic practices, as they did not see the economic agreement linked to their attitudes towards democracy (Gentleman and Zubek, 1992).

5.3. Mexico and North American integration: the curious case of linkage without leverage

As I briefly explained in the first chapter, the events surrounding the highly contested 1988 presidential election are probably better remembered as the 'beginning of the end' of Mexico's single-party rule. However, the early days of Carlos Salinas' presidency also signalled a radical change in the way Mexico related to the international; from then on Mexico's economic policy was transformed and autarky stopped being a viable option. Although the López Portillo (1976-1982) and de la Madrid (1982-1988) administrations had already started to open up to the world, they had done so for the 'wrong' reasons. López Portillo was emboldened by an oil bonanza that took him, in an attempt to rehabilitate the regime's image, to break with Mexico's 'non-intervention' tradition in international affairs and get involved in the Central American conflicts (Mazza, 2001: 14). Conversely, although de la Madrid probably succeeded in strengthening Mexico's links with the rest of Latin America (Castañeda, 1988: 13-14), he

eventually ended up following the usual neoliberal reforms pushed by the IMF and the United States Treasury once the inevitable end to the oil bonanza sparked a severe deficit crisis. By his own admission, de la Madrid let Carlos Salinas – by appointing Gustavo Petriccioli (later to be appointed Mexican ambassador to Washington and one of Salinas' closest allies) as the head of the Mexican Treasury – take control of the country's economic policy as early as June 1986 (Castañeda, 1999: 198). Whether this path was chosen by de la Madrid or imposed by the circumstances continues to be debated. Manuel Bartlett, the Interior Minister under Miguel De la Madrid and one of his closest allies, claims that they had no other choice but to accept the recommendation of the IMF and the American Treasury in the mid 1980s, thus handing the initiative to the technocrats (Aristegui, 2009: 22-23). On the other hand, I have already mentioned how Salinas has claimed that his presidency was a 'social liberal' experiment later discredited by the 'neoliberals'. Whether it was chosen or imposed, this change in policy did lead to the eventual ratification of NAFTA in the United States Congress in November 1993. This policy change also heightened the vulnerability of the regime to international forces; the pressure that Mexico has been under since the early 1990s to 'integrate itself economically, politically, and culturally to the values of a range of international forces is unprecedented' (Levy and Bruhn, 2006: 66). Finally, this radical change in policy was accompanied by an exaggerated expectation and, as said before, signified the end of a self-imposed 'exceptionalism' that had shaped Mexico's foreign policy since the 1930s under the principles of nationalism, xenophobia, mistrust of the United States (and other superpowers), limitations on foreign investment, and a strong interventionist state (Dresser, 1996: 318).

The previous chapter looked at the supposed correlation between socioeconomic development and democratisation in Mexico, and the role NAFTA played in this process. From that analysis, I concluded that NAFTA's influence on Mexico's democratic development was, at best, debatable. Unlike the somehow hazy and contentious relationship between NAFTA, the economy and democracy, the impact NAFTA had on the behaviour of Mexican elites is not only far more interesting in my opinion, but also clearer to see. Levitsky and Way's model, as detailed in the theoretical chapter of this thesis, already explains how leverage can, by increasing the cost of repression, electoral fraud or other government abuses, be an efficient democratisation tool when combined with high linkage to Western democracies. Linkage not only raises the costs of undemocratic behaviour for the governing elites but also for everybody else (Levitsky and Way, 2005: 33). What is more, although Franco's Spain does not fit their definition of a 'competitive authoritarian' regime and as such falls outside what would be an ideal case for the application of their model, Levitsky and Way (2010: 153) consider the post-1982 PRI regime to be a clear example of 'competitive authoritarianism'.

According to this model, then, Mexico's democratisation prospects were to exponentially

increase as the linkage to the United States that had been developing since the mid 1980s, and that gained even more momentum with the negotiating and implementation of NAFTA, advanced. Levitsky and Way argue that – and I agree with this argument – Mexico represents, however, an unusual example of linkage without leverage. They claim that direct leverage was almost unnecessary due to the deep linkage between Mexico and, mainly, the United States. Given that since the 1980s the PRI regime changed its strategy by betting on free trade-fuelled economic development as a source of legitimacy, successive PRI governments (mainly De la Madrid's, Salinas' and Zedillo's), in their pursuit of the international credibility that would safeguard this strategy, virtually unilaterally decided to underutilise 'their coercive capacity and [to invest] in strong electoral institutions' (Levitsky and Way, 2010: 161). The view is that the PRI regime 'did not have to democratise' (or at least it had other options) but chose to do so simply because the United States 'would not allow Mexico into NAFTA without a credible promise to democratise' (Philip, 2002: 133). Therefore, although leverage was not directly applied, the international conditions were enough for the regime to behave with moderation. In the case of Mexico, then, '*indirect* pressure for reform' generated by linkage and other 'linkage-based' forms of constraint (Levitsky and Way, 2010: 154-155) were enough to guide the regime towards democratic reforms. 'Even without conditionality, then, linkage "limit[ed] the range of choices that might be made by Mexican policy makers"' (*ibid*: 155-156).

It is my view, however, that Levitsky and Way only describe how, in the case of Mexico, an increase in linkage (i.e. internationalisation) led to an increase in the sensitivity to leverage. There is no doubt that 'in the context of international negotiations over free trade, democracy advocates and opposition political parties used the government's sensitivity to international criticism' to try and force political change (Selee and Peschard, 2010: 13). Yet the tentative steps that were taken in a democratic direction, that stem from the international context, were more part of a preventive strategy than the result of any actual leverage. Although I do not agree with the view that the international community – i.e. the United States – actually strengthened the regime's position and thus prolonged the transition (Aguayo Quezada, 2010a: 32), I argue that despite having the capacity to considerably accelerate the process the United States failed to do so by refusing to actually use any of its leverage potential. Certainly the dynamic of 'baby steps' reform that characterised Mexico's protracted transition – very similar to what Charles E. Lindblom (1959) famously referred to as 'the science of "muddling through"' in policymaking – easily predates the development of international linkages (Dresser, 2005: 363). The PRI regime had always used electoral processes as a legitimising tool domestically, as well as a tool to protect its image internationally. The fact is that the clear increase in the sensitivity to international leverage, caused by increasing linkages, only marginally (if at all) accelerated the already established dynamic of protracted reform. Unlike the Spanish transition, Mexico's democratisation process did not produce a foundational pact (the 1978 Constitution and the

Moncloa pacts of 1977 in Spain), or a comprehensive reform of the political institutions (Merino, 2003: 15). Indeed, the fact that the transition has been slowly played out almost exclusively at the elite level – political parties constantly negotiating amongst themselves over resources rather than overarching reform – remains the main problem of Mexico's transition (*ibid*: 8). Therefore, linkage on its own – with the inherent increase in the sensitivity to leverage – was not enough to transform or truly accelerate the dynamic of Mexico's long transition to democracy, and hence it was not conducive to a more successful democratisation.

What is more, to say that the increased linkage to the United States led to the PRI administrations – Salinas' in particular but also Zedillo's – to practice any sort of self-restraint when violent repression was chosen over co-option feels like a stretch. The targeting of PRD activists during the Salinas administration (already mentioned in the previous chapter), as well as the string of political assassinations that plagued the last months of his government, are actually evidence of how comfortable and confident the regime was with its international situation. The Acteal Massacre of December 1997 – when a paramilitary group murdered 45 men, women and children in Chiapas – somehow fails to support the vision of a PRI government keen on underutilising its coercive capacity. In fact, it seems likelier that the Zedillo administration's ability to cope with international human rights pressures was indeed 'more impressive than its capacity to [actually] improve human rights conditions in Mexico' (Domínguez and Fernández de Castro, 2009: 110). Similarly, the fact that Washington 'was determined to ignore what had become, [already] by late 1990, Salinas' track record of election fraud and political violence' (Gentleman and Zubek, 1992: 84), does not mean these were not taking place.

However, I do agree with Levitsky and Way's basic premise that when a country embarks on a project of internationalisation it recognises that linkage, as well as its susceptibility to leverage, will invariably increase. Mexico was no exception. What was if not exceptional certainly at least very unusual, was that Mexico's transition took place in an atmosphere characterised by an increasing linkage to the United States yet also – by refusing to impose any political conditionality during NAFTA's negotiations and by refusing to criticise the PRI regime – by a complete lack of leverage. Cold War mentality could, to an extent, explain why the United States policy towards Mexico prioritised stability over democracy; but it cannot explain why most American policy-makers regarded criticism against the PRI regime as counterproductive well after it came to an end. It is no secret that the United States' main foreign policy objective towards the region has historically been, particularly in the case of Mexico, to maintain stability rather than promote democracy or development (Gentleman and Zubek, 1992: 84; Mazza, 2001). The first precedence of this approach towards Mexico was set during the Porfirio Díaz dictatorship that managed to normalise relationships with the United States by simply achieving

stability. After the hiatus that was the Mexican Revolution – which, somehow unsurprisingly, set the conditions for the American intervention in Veracruz in 1914 – the PRI regime borrowed a page from Díaz's book and normalised the bilateral relation⁴ by achieving political stability. The 'normalisation' of relations, however, became everything but a 'normal' bilateral relationship during the Cold War. As the Cold War intensified so did the zealous non-interventionist stance of the United States towards Mexico. Successive PRI governments (from the Ruiz Cortines (1952-1958) to the López Portillo (1976-1982) administrations) had, to varying degrees, shielded themselves from foreign criticism by proclaiming their neutrality under the third-world banner, and by conducting a foreign policy based on non-intervention and non-interference (the so-called 'Estrada Doctrine') that helped Mexico's image as a 'progressive international force' (Dresser, 1996: 318). Although this represented a good trade-off for both countries, the United States 'took this bargain to the extreme. Instead of simply respecting the sovereignty of Mexico, the U.S. government almost completely ignored Mexico' (Domínguez and Fernández de Castro, 2009: 10). Even more so, throughout the whole Cold War, when containment dominated foreign policy calculations, democracy in Mexico was not merely secondary to other geopolitical considerations but it was even questionable in itself; there was no guarantee that democracy would not, as it had done in Chile, lead to a left-wing government (Mazza, 2001: 7). This is a very distinctive difference between the foreign policy approach the United States took towards Mexico and Spain during the Cold War; whilst the United States simply did not care what regime Spain had as long as it was a 'cooperative' one, the continuation of the PRI regime was, in the case of Mexico, arguably preferred to a transition to democracy.

This foreign policy stance towards Mexico during the Cold War was certainly not exceptional, but rather an element of the preferred strategy towards Latin America. What is interesting in the case of Mexico, nonetheless, is that this policy remained almost unchanged after the end of the Cold War. According to Jacqueline Mazza (2001), there is an 'operational code' amongst policy

⁴ Following an interview with an American journalist in March 1908 – in which Díaz claimed that his political ideals had not been 'corrupted' by his then 32 years in power and that he still firmly believed that democracy was the only just type of government (Díaz-Creelman Interview, in Aguayo Quezada, 2010b: 23) – the then Secretary of State Elihu Root bizarrely claimed that 'from all men alive today, the worthiest is General Porfirio Díaz [...] if I were Mexican I would feel a devout fidelity for the rest of my life that would not repay what he has done for what would be my country [...] I see Porfirio Díaz, president of Mexico as a great man that should be considered a model of heroism by the entire Human race' (*ibid*: 24). The meeting between President William H. Taft and Porfirio Díaz at El Paso Texas and then Ciudad Juárez in October 1909 – the first ever visit to Mexico by a sitting American President (Aguayo Quezada, 2005: 76) – was further indication of the regime's success in establishing more than mere cordial relations between the two nations. Indeed, it was American investors who 'ultimately financed much of Mexico's railroad construction' in the last decades of the nineteenth century (Summerhill, 1997: 98). This 'normalisation' in the relationship, however, was anything but 'normal'. In fact, this 'normalisation' came at the price of Mexico being, for all intents and purposes, left out of most foreign policy consideration by the United States. The unprecedented level of stability led to a 'policy of no policy' that remained more or less a constant until the 1980s (Mazza, 2001).

makers in the United States that predisposes them to take no-action when dealing with Mexico; the 'policy of no policy' has become the policy. The idea that intervening in Mexican affairs could only complicate what is already a very complicated relationship has remained unchanged despite the fact that Mexico has already undergone radical changes (*ibid*: 4-7). For whatever reasons though, this continuation of the policy towards Mexico may explain why, when NAFTA was being negotiated, there were no serious calls for any sort of political conditions; a point made very clear by Washington both 'officially and in a variety of semi-official forums' (Gentleman and Zubek, 1992: 79). There are, as ever, contrasting views of why this was the case. The view from NAFTA supporters in Mexico is that any sort of political conditionality would have implied that NAFTA had a political dimension; any hint of NAFTA being anything else than a strictly free-trade agreement would have immediately led to a loss of the required support in the United States Congress (De la Calle Pardo, 2003: 1-2). Although the Democrats held a slender majority in both Houses of Congress, the share of the seats was finely distributed; any move towards including any sort of democratic conditionality would have sat well with the Democrats but this would have almost invariably led to the PRI regime asking for further concessions, which would have in turn led to 'a haemorrhage of Republican backers' (*ibid*). The fact that the treaty is what it is, from the perspective of the Mexican negotiators, is due to the fact that it is all it could ever be.

There is also the argument that since an alternative left-wing movement against NAFTA and free trade did not emerge until the 2006 electoral process with the campaign of Andrés Manuel López Obrador (Pastor, 2011: 13) – the PRD candidate to the presidency – there was no real political force inside Mexico pushing for political conditionality either. NAFTA supporters when challenged about the clearly undemocratic nature of the treaty – i.e. it is a binding international treaty signed by a government that cannot be considered, by anyone's standards, as democratic – have also used this argument to justify NAFTA. The reasoning being that there was a consensus in Mexico that NAFTA and free trade were positive for the country's development. Jorge Domínguez and James McCann (1996: 69) agree that since the 1980s – and data from the Latinobarometro seems to confirm this – the majority of Mexicans have tended to favour FDI and free trade, but this has not been the case with other individual issues regarding economic liberalisation such as the privatisation of state industries. Even more importantly, Domínguez and McCann claim that Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas' challenge in the 1988 election was so successful precisely because it represented an alternative to the economic policy chosen during de la Madrid's administration; in fact, Mexican society was polarised around the issue (*ibid*: 52). The idea that there was no organised domestic opposition to NAFTA pushing for democratic conditionality is not supported by the facts. In November 1990, just as the news broke that the Salinas' government was indeed pursuing a free trade agreement with the United States and Canada, Cárdenas gave a speech in Vancouver in which he categorically called for a

multilateral agreement that would include a social chapter and that would strengthen Mexico's struggle for democracy (Cárdenas, 2010: 325). Adolfo Aguilar Zinser and Jorge Castañeda – who later became Vicente Fox's Ambassador to the UN and Secretary of Foreign Affairs respectively – went directly to the State Department and to a number of Democratic Congressmen with the idea of conditioning NAFTA on the regime accepting international observers in the 1994 elections but were quickly turned down (Mazza, 2001: 95). The fact that the PRI eventually allowed observers anyway, shows just how reluctant the United States were on setting any sort of conditions. In any case, it is clear that Cárdenas, Aguilar Zinser and Castañeda were all of the idea that democratic conditionality was desirable; hence to claim that this was not included because there was no real domestic political pressure to make it happen is misleading.

The fact that there was a domestic opposition at elite level against NAFTA, as well as those who wanted it to be conditioned to democratic reforms is significant in its own right. The success of the PRI regime greatly relied on its ability to maintain a high degree of stability within the elite through cyclical regeneration. Although the agreements that gave birth to the PNR – the first forebear of the PRI – only achieved a partial unification of the elites – the Church and business sectors were excluded (Knight, 1992: 122) – the PRI regime eventually achieved a degree of elite unification and cooperation that is hard to achieve under non-democratic regimes. Authoritarian regimes are, more often than not, characterised by the exclusion of a complete sector of society. In the case of Spain, for example, the Franco regime excluded the defeated factions in the Civil War and maintained its stability by limiting the emergence of other elite groups. In the case of Spain, as has been already discussed, the liberalisation of the economy and the access to European capital led to the emergence of a new elite or *petit bourgeoisie* (Holman, 1993; Poulantzas, 1976: 30) that challenged the established Francoist elite funded mainly by American and/or protected domestic capital. It was this elite disunity that, following Higley and Burton's (1989) model, led to instability inside the regime and what eventually may have opened the door to far-reaching democratic reforms – after all, democracy remains the only way of institutionalising conflict. A similar process took place in Mexico but with a very different outcome. The elite fracture that occurred in Mexico during the 1980s took place within the regime itself; the *Corriente Democrática* within the PRI that was started by Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas – a civil engineer graduated from UNAM and the son of former left-wing president Lázaro Cárdenas – and Porfirio Muñoz Ledo – a former leader of the party and a law graduate from UNAM – represented the 'traditional' wing of the party *vis a vis* the 'techno-yuppies'. Unfortunately, the 'democratic wing' of the regime that broke away from the party before the 1988 elections was not supported by any international actors, which partly explains why it failed to 'mobilise the previously un-mobilised' (Domínguez and McCann, 1996: 11).

What is more, the fact that the United States openly supported Salinas' wing inside the PRI, together with the consensus inside Mexico that free trade and FDI were positive for the country's development, resulted in a very different reorientation of power than in Spain. Whilst, as mentioned before, Europe's insistence that democracy was necessary if Spain was to join the EEC led to the moderation of some of the francoist elites as they went from being 'hardliners' to being 'soft-liners'. In the case of Mexico the complete opposite happened; economic integration with North America was not associated with democratisation but actually with the survival of the PRI regime. If anything, we could argue that the United States position had the effect of further radicalising the anti-democratic factions of the PRI.

The lack of support by the United States to the *Frente Democrático Nacional* and then to the PRD is not, however, that hard to understand; it was primarily a left-wing movement that, by opposing extensive liberalisation, was against basic US interests. This does not explain, though, why the United States government remained supportive of the PRI regime rather than supporting the PAN – a far more sensible and conservative opposition force. Based on the United States wider foreign policy it seems likely that both the Bush and Clinton administrations considered that free market reforms would invariably lead, as they did in Post-communist Europe, to Mexico's democratisation, and thus calculated that antagonising the PRI was an unnecessary hassle since democracy would happen anyway. The expectation was that trade would not only lead to Mexico's development – and thus to democratisation – but also that the sheer 'volume of economic transactions between the three countries and their intricate structural ties linking the three economies' would provide economic incentives for a further rationalisation of free trade (Inglehart *et al.*, 1996: 33). This self-reinforcing pattern would in turn lead to further interaction between individuals in the three countries, increasing trust between the three societies and an eventual merger in basic values (*ibid*: 18). All these would invariably have to lead to the democratisation of Mexico.

This explanation also seems to be more in tune with the preference amongst American policymakers of interfering as little as possible when dealing with Mexico. What is more, the fact that Carlos Salinas was regarded as a champion of the free market more or less guaranteed Washington's support. His economics education in Harvard as well as the Ivy League degrees of his closes associates⁵, it seemed, was evidence enough of his commitment to democratic reform. It also meant that the NAFTA negotiations could be moved forward with relative ease; the fact that the highest Mexican officials spoke fluent English, had degrees from American

⁵ This new Latin 'Techno-Yuppies', as referred to by the US media (*Newsweek* 11/11/1990) included – besides President Carlos Salinas – Trade Minister Jaime Serra Puche, Budget Minister Ernesto Zedillo – both Yale graduates – and Finance Minister Pedro Aspe – from MIT.

universities and shared many of the values as their counterparts in the United States translated into the bilateral negotiations becoming like ‘conversations amongst members of the same team’ (Domínguez and Fernández de Castro, 2009: 31). This also meant, of course, that the personal friendships and affinities, as well as a common vision, gave the PRI elite some important leeway. The fact, for example, that Salinas’ PhD dissertation – ‘Public Investment, Political Participation, and System Support’ – was very much a draft version of PRONASOL, which supposedly was introduced to alleviate extreme poverty but in reality worked more as a new version of the old PRI’s patronage networks (Urzúa, 1997: 94), did not seem to deter the enthusiasm of American policy-makers. Immediately after the highly contentious elections of 1988 and even before Salinas was officially announced as the winner, for instance, the American Embassy in Mexico had already publicly congratulated him on his victory; no major newspaper in the United States even reported on the highly contentious nature of the elections (Aguayo Quezada, 2010a: 116). The Reagan administration even congratulated Carlos Salinas on his victory before the votes had been counted (Domínguez and Fernández de Castro, 2009: 107). Not entirely inconsequential, is the fact that the second leader to congratulate Salinas – also before he was declared the official winner – was Felipe González, which led to Porfirio Muñoz Ledo (the co-founder of *Corriente Democrática* alongside Cárdenas) claiming that the PSOE was now, ironically, supporting what he referred to as a ‘type of Mexican Francoism’ (Aguayo Quezada, 2010a: 119).

It is somehow puzzling that despite the wave of democratisation in Latin America and the support that the United States was showing to emerging democracies in the region, consecutive American administrations decided to remain quiet in the case of Mexico. The Reagan administration, for example, rarely criticised the PRI regime or met with the PAN leadership, yet it was incredibly vocal and gave ‘explicit electoral financial support’ to the opposition in Chile during the plebiscite campaign (Mazza, 2001: 57). There is certainly nothing new about the United States not supporting an emerging democracy. What is surprising is that in the case of Mexico, US administrations not only did nothing to encourage democracy but actually went as far as supporting the PRI regime. The 1991-1992 Action Plan from USAID went as far as claiming that democracy promotion activities in Mexico would be counter-productive (*ibid*: 66). The NED offered very little funding for democratic development in Mexico during the Reagan and Bush years or during the NAFTA negotiations; neither of its Republican (the International Republican Institute) or Democrat (National Democratic Institute for International Affairs) wings offered any support to opposition parties until the early 1990s, and even then it was rather limited (*ibid*: 52). This is particularly puzzling since the Salinas’ administration had given every indication that they were desperate to improve Mexico’s image in the United States regarding the PRI’s record in Human Rights and democracy (Domínguez and Fernández de Castro, 2009: 108-110).

The absolute refusal to even raise the issue of political conditionality was a continuation of a 'policy of no-policy', and constituted a definitive missed opportunity to strengthen Mexico's democracy. Even the slightest signs of discontent in the United States were enough to make the regime give some concessions, as the creation of the *Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos* (National Human Rights Commission – CNDH) proves (Aguayo Quezada, 2010a: 126; Gentleman and Zubek, 1992: 80-81). The Mexican elites must have calculated that, although the United States government had no intention of asking for any sort of political conditionality, both Bush and Clinton were still vulnerable to criticism by Congress or other interests groups that could use the PRI's democracy and human rights records as a pressure point to advance their own protectionist interests. Despite assurances by the Bush and Clinton administrations, both in public and in private, that they had no intention of pursuing an explicitly pro-democratic agenda with NAFTA, the regime's elite was so sensitive to events in the United States that any sort of criticism from unofficial circles prompted a response.

5.4.Conclusion: leverage as a determinant factor

This comparison between the Spanish and the Mexican experiences with internationalisation at elite level helps illustrate how sensitive elites are to international pressure when transitions to democracy overlap with projects of internationalisation. In the case of Spain, it has even been argued that 'Europe as a political example was probably far more important for Spain [...] than the European Union as a set of material incentives' (Fishman, 2003: 40). NAFTA, in stark contrast, was imposed by a nondemocratic regime on Mexican society and, regardless of whether the majority of Mexicans agreed with it or not, it cannot be regarded as an example of democratic policy-making. Accession into the Common Market was for the Spanish elites at the helm of the transition an important incentive to democratise. The fact is that the Spanish elites, much as their Mexican counterparts, were very sensitive to European opinion and pressure. The difference is that Europe decided to actively engage in Spanish democratisation; by conditioning accession into the EEC to democratic reforms, the EEC was effectively using its leverage potential. This conditionality in itself was certainly not enough to cause the democratisation of Spain but it certainly played a part in shaping the process. European integration was probably the only thing every single sector of society, political party or key actor could agree on. The widespread belief that EEC membership was key to the development of Spain injected the process of democratisation with a certain degree of urgency; without democracy there would be no entry into the Common market, and without the Common Market there would be no modernisation of Spain.

This sort of consensus at elite level was never reached in the case of Mexico. On top of this, one

has to consider the active role individual European democracies took in supporting Spanish democracy. It is well documented that the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE) developed strong links with the German SPD and the Swedish Socialists, whom, in turn, offered financial and logistic support to the PSOE's electoral effort (Plattner, 2009: 6; Ortega Ortiz, 2008: 135). What is more, the PSOE's leader, Felipe González, took advantage of Willy Brandt and Olof Palme's personal endorsements – and substantial financial and logistical support (Ortega Ortiz, 2008: 125) to convince the Spanish electorate that the PSOE was ready to head a democratic government (*Blanco y Negro*, 26/4/1975; *Europa Press*, 23/12/1975). One can only speculate on the outcome of the Mexican transition had policy-makers in the United States shown a similar level of commitment to Mexico's democracy. The almost paranoid refusal by the United States government to consider any sort of democratic provisions as part of economic integration seems to have encouraged anti-democratic practices by the regime. Or, at the very least, despite the increasing linkage making the PRI regime incredibly vulnerable to foreign leverage, the fact that successive American administrations were unwilling to use it allowed the dynamic of 'muddle-through' democratisation to continue. It is widely accepted that Mexico's 'long transition', which started at the subnational level in the 1980s and is still to be completed in some parts of the country (as seen in the third chapter) (Hiskey and Bowler, 2005: 58-59), as well as the lack of any foundational pacts and the far-reaching institutional reforms that can only emerge from such agreements, greatly explains its limited success. During the negotiation stages of NAFTA the Mexican elites were probably more susceptible than they have ever been to political pressure from the United States; once the treaty was agreed, however, the leverage potential decreased greatly. Just as it happens in Europe, 'the temptation of the carrot is strong [only] as long as the offer of membership has not yet been made, since then the stick of conditionality could become an empty threat' (Dimitrova and Pridham, 2004: 109). Unless there is a further push for regional integration in North America, it seems unlikely that a similar opportunity to apply pro-democratic leverage will present itself again.

Certainly it is not possible to affirm that internationalisation causes democratisation, but it is possible to infer that – given that NAFTA played an important role in Mexico's democratisation without even trying – had there been a stronger will to apply any sort of leverage amongst American policy-makers, NAFTA's positive effects on Mexico's democratic transition would have been greater. A quick comparison with the Spanish case confirms this. Therefore, internationalisation projects should be considered when analysing transitions to democracy; in particular when there is a will to complement linkage with leverage and vice versa.

CHAPTER VI. Internationalisation and Democratisation 'from Below'

The previous two chapters have already analysed how integration with North America and Western Europe influenced the processes of democratisation in Mexico and Spain, respectively, in a number of ways. The third chapter presented a brief comparison of the evolution of both processes of regionalisation, as well as a brief analysis of how internationalisation projects – even when weakly institutionalised – can open opportunities for institutional transformations. The fourth chapter presented – following the premises of a broad understanding of modernisation theory – a detailed analysis of the supposed correlation between internationalisation, socioeconomic development and democratisation. The fifth chapter, on the other hand, analysed how the different approaches to internationalisation shaped the actions of specific actors thus influencing the transitions to democracy at elite level in both cases. The main argument in the previous chapter was that, despite the fact that both countries were developing stronger linkages to democratic centres, the variation in the use of leverage (i.e. democratic conditionality) was an important factor in their transitions to democracy. This chapter, then, deals above all with what could be considered the 'other side of the coin'. Whilst the previous chapter dealt with the structural factors and elite calculations (democratisation 'from above') that shaped the transitions to democracy in Spain and Mexico, this chapter will focus on the social dimension of democratisation. Firstly, this chapter will briefly revisit the theory relating to the social dimension of democratisation processes. The brief theoretical background will be immediately followed by an overall comparison between the ways NAFTA and the EEC/EU dealt with the social and cultural consequences of integration, and then by a detailed description of the part the social dimension (mass values, identity, civil society and social capital, and political culture in general) played in the Mexican and Spanish transitions. Finally, the last part of this chapter will argue how the clear sociocultural dimension of the process of European integration played a key part in Spain's democratisation 'from below', whilst the limited ambition of NAFTA failed to support a similar social consensus in favour of democracy.

6.1. A Culturalist approach: democratisation from 'below'

It is important to, in the first instance, revisit in further detail the argument analysed in detail in the second chapter regarding the importance of social values and/or cultural attitudes (political culture in particular) in the consolidation of democracy. This is of particular interest for this thesis because both Spain and Mexico's transitions have often been regarded as 'non-responsive/enlightened' processes that were initialised and negotiated from above (Welzel, 2009: 87-88). However, an important premise of this thesis is that democratisation is an inherently multicausal process and, as such, there was also a 'responsive' dimension (*ibid*) to

both processes of democratisation that has to be explored. This social dimension of democratisation processes refers to the transformations in the characteristics of the political cultures and social/mass values, as well as other social transformations that help the consolidation of democracy. When speaking of democratisation, one of the most studied social developments credited with contributing towards the consolidation (more than the transition in itself) of democracy, has been the emergence of social capital. Social capital, simply defined as an 'instantiated set of formal values or norms shared among the members of a group that permits them to cooperate with one another' (Fukuyama, 2000: 98), is closely related to the emergence of a healthy civil society. Civil society, understood here as the cluster of voluntary associations that 'extend beyond the purely local and informal but that do not typically carry as much political content as activities guided toward policy' (McDonough *et al.*, 1998a: 16), may not include political parties or other policy specific interest groups but it still plays a key part in the process of democratisation. Social capital and a healthy civil society, theoretically at least, allow 'different groups within a complex society to band together to defend their interests, which might otherwise be disregarded by the powerful state' (Fukuyama, 2000: 99-100). The existence of horizontal organisations independent of the state is a key characteristic of democratic regimes, but above all a strong civil society helps eradicate authoritarian tendencies within society (Encarnación, 2001: 54) as well as reinforcing society's commitment to democracy (Hamman, 2003: 62). It is no surprise then that the assertion that 'a flourishing civil society is an essential ingredient for successful democratisation' (Encarnación, 2001: 55) almost became common wisdom during the 1990s and the beginning of last decade.

At this point it should be made clear that, as discussed in the theoretical chapter of this thesis, although there seems to be a growing concern regarding the use of a simple distinction between the transition and consolidation stages of democratisation (this dichotomy gives the impression that democracy is a linear process) (Aguayo Quezada, 2010a: 24; Bejarano, 2011: 6; Pridham, 1995: 167), societal changes seem to be more relevant during the consolidation stage of the process. While there are still many questions regarding what consolidation actually means (are temporal considerations enough as suggested by Diamond, Linz and Lipset (1995: 9) and Peeler (1992: 102 and 109), or is consolidation related to wider social transformations as O'Donnell and Schmitter suggest (1986: 43)?), in the interest of pragmatism I will use the distinction between transition and consolidation in its simplest chronological sense. Hence, we could say that the consolidation stage in the cases of Mexico and Spain began when alternation in power was achieved. In the case of Spain, then, this is after Felipe González takes control of government in 1982, and in the case of Mexico we could say the consolidation stage begins somewhere between the PRI losing control of Congress in 1997 and the PAN winning the Presidency in 2000.

This focus on the consolidation stage is more than mere caprice. Although social movements can play an important part during the early stages of transition – especially in cases like Mexico where ‘authoritarian elections’ provide important ‘structural opportunities for collective challenges’ to emerge (Schedler, 2009: 306) – the cycle of mobilisation suggests that after a rapid increase of social participation during the transition, the citizenship tends to demobilise rather quickly unless a specific challenge to democracy emerges (as the 1981 attempted coup in Spain) (O’Donnell and Schmitter, 1986: 26-27). During the Spanish transition, for instance, social mobilisations began suddenly in the early 1970s – with groups like the *Comisiones de Barrio* in the working class enclaves of Madrid and Barcelona – but were in clear decline by 1977 (Encarnación, 2008: 73). We could, therefore, say that an increase in civil society engagement initially supports democratisation by facilitating the organisation of an opposition to a non-democratic regime. Once democracy is established, though, civil society contributes greatly towards the maintenance of democracy by expanding the citizenry’s access to information (thus increasing governmental accountability), helping members of society to learn compromise and tolerance, stimulate individual participation in politics, facilitate trust, increase solidarity and even work as a training ground for would be political leaders (Berman, 2009: 38; Paxton, 2002: 254). For this reason, although without ignoring the many social transformations in Spain during the 1960s in particular (which were a clear effect of the overall process of modernisation in the country) or the many relevant social movements that took place during Mexico’s protracted transition (the 1968 student movement or the 1988 post-electoral movement), this chapter will primarily focus on the consolidation stage of the democratisation process in both countries.

Besides the specific role civil society and social capital play in consolidating democracy, it would be fair to assume that some sort of social consensus supporting democracy and a participative citizenry (even if their engagement is minimal) are necessary conditions for the appropriate functioning of democratic political institutions (Duarand Ponte, 2004: 19). This is not to say that support for democracy from below or a robust civil society are enough to secure democratisation, or even that these are more important than the institutional design in itself. In fact, regardless of how robust a civil society is, if an adequately democratic institutional framework does not accompany it, it will probably not make much of a difference (Encarnación, 2001: 54). Yet, most scholars from the three broad theoretical ‘schools’ of democratisation (i.e. modernisation, culturalist and elitist/institutionalist) would acknowledge that, for democracy to become ‘the only game in town’, there has to be a broad consensus that the only possible way to attain power is through the ‘competitive struggle for the people’s vote’. Inglehart and Welzel’s (2005) theory of democratisation, for instance, paints a very clear picture of the relationship between mass values and democratisation. Some institutional scholars also claim that although it is interaction with institutions that shapes the attitudes, orientations and feelings of individuals

towards the political system (what we can understand as political culture) (Lijphart, 1980; Crespo, 2007), mass values will invariably have to be aligned with democratic institutions if democracy is to be consolidated. And there are, of course, culturalist scholars – from Tocqueville to Putnam – that view culture as an independent variable that can, by itself, explain democracy. Whether or not changes in political culture are completely independent from institutional arrangements, socioeconomic development or variances of the wider culture is, for the time being, irrelevant. What is worth noting here is that, at least at some level, most democratisation theories acknowledge that mass values and societal preferences play some part in democratisation.

Finally, there is a need to explore what implications, if any, the international context can have in the sort of social transformations that are conducive to democratic consolidation. The previous chapter already established how the internationalisation processes in Spain and Mexico increased the linkages to democratic centres in Europe and North America respectively, and, by increasing the salience of the international context in domestic politics, also increased the susceptibility to leverage. There is, however, the need to also focus on the linkage dimension and the influence the international setting had in social and cultural transformations. After all, internationalisation usually involves more than the ‘repressive’ dimension of the state apparatus (i.e. its institutions of control), and includes the ‘ideological’ and ‘mass-integrative dimensions’ that operate ‘through extra-bureaucratic and extra-legal means’ (Görg and Hirsch, 1998: 591). Thus, when internationalisation leads to an increase in linkage between countries, it affects all aspects of the political life; when an ‘internationalisation of domestic politics’ – as defined by Douglas Chalmers (1993) – takes place, there is a significant presence of ‘internationally based actors’ within a number of formal, as well as informal institutions (i.e. those that include ‘any set of settled routines, norms and procedures which are recognised by the participants in allocating authority, establishing ways of resolving conflicts, and setting the broad procedural terms for arriving at decisions’) (*ibid*). As said before, though, the use of the concept ‘informal institutions’ understood as the diffuse norms, self-images and preferences that can help actors predict behaviour (Jackman and Miller, 1996: 635), can lead to confusion and makes it unnecessarily harder to distinguish between political institutions and political culture. In any case, what Chalmers calls informal institutions is simply what we understand as political culture and mass values. In short, regardless of what we want to call it, the fact is that internationalisation influences social constructs and political culture, just as much as it does elites’ calculations and institutional arrangements.

6.2. Do supranational identities matter in transitions to democracy? Contrasting the EU and NAFTA: embracing vs. ignoring the cultural dimension of internationalisation

Before presenting the analysis of how the two processes of internationalisation have contributed towards the transformation of social interactions, mass values and political culture, it is necessary to develop an overall comparison between the two projects. It is the premise of this chapter that the process of European integration directly and indirectly contributed towards the process of 'bottom up' democratisation (or the 'responsive' dimension of the transition) in Spain, whilst the process of North American regionalisation failed to have the same positive effects in Mexico. The fact that there was a lack of a coherent effort in North America to develop the sort of sociocultural policies (or at least a coordination/cooperation in the policies) that emphasise similarities and that can lead to the emergence of a common 'identity' – which in turn leads to an increased interaction between the three countries' societies and a reinforcing of the integration process – meant that Mexico's internationalisation process did not contribute towards the development of a democratic political culture or towards building a consensus at social level in favour of democracy. In the case of Spain, Europe played an important role both as an incentive to support democracy at social level and as a source of democratic values and practices. This, however, could not have happened had Europe not recognised the importance of the sociocultural dimension of its integration process and had it not taken steps to strengthen its common identity.

As emphasised repeatedly in the previous chapters, the process of European integration, albeit carried out by primarily economic means, has been, in great measure, a politically motivated process. Accordingly, Spain had clear political as well as economic (as analysed in the fourth chapter) motivations to seek membership with the Community (Tsoukalis, 1978: 438). Given this clearly political dimension, it is not surprising to also find a social element in the construction of Europe. The use of language that inferred a clear bond between the process of European integration and distinctive social and political principles can be traced all the way back to the Treaties of Rome. Although nowhere in the Treaty are words like 'democracy' 'identity' or 'culture' used, the Treaty does invite other peoples of Europe that share the ideals of 'peace and liberty' to join in the integrationist efforts of the Six (Treaty of Rome 1957: prologue). As a wider, at least geographically, instrument of European integration, the Council of Europe's European Social Charter of 1961 (which Spain did not ratify until 1980), went a long way in defining the sort of social interactions (mainly in a setting of labour relations) that are characteristic in European democratic societies. All of the EU's major treaties from the SEA onwards have also made direct allusion to the principle of democracy (SEA, Prologue), common European principles (Treaty of Amsterdam, 1997: Article 1, section 8a.), a common heritage (Treaty of Lisbon Article 1, section 1), or the principle of solidarity between the member states (Treaty of Nice, 2001; Article 1, section 16).

As explained previously, societal support for democracy is, at the very least, helpful for its

consolidation. Although the fact that the Spanish transition was well on its way before Spain achieved EEC membership suggests that 'Spaniards did not require [membership] in order to solidify their commitment to democracy' (Fishman, 2003: 38), this does not mean that Spain's internationalisation process – and the linkages at social level already being developed with Europe during the pre-accession stages – did not contribute towards the solidification of this commitment to democracy. It also does not mean that Europe was not seen as more than a mere common market. Indeed European integration has been for Spaniards the ultimate guarantee that the country would maintain a democratic order and a place in the international arena (Alvárez de Miranda, 2003: 109). It is therefore not surprising that the Spanish citizenry has generally seen Spain's membership in Europe and the wider process of European integration in a positive light since the 1950s (Díez Medrano, 2007: 205). In fact, as far as the late 1990s, a higher percentage of Spaniards regarded the process of European integration as positive than the percentage of the population that thought Spain was benefiting from EU membership. In other words, a percentage of the Spanish population has been in favour of European integration despite their belief that Spain was not directly benefiting (in material terms) from EU membership (Barreiro and Sánchez-Cuenca, 2001: 34).

The long-held belief amongst Spaniards that their 'history, culture and religious values belong squarely with the European tradition' (Encarnación, 2008: 32), which intensified during the 1960s and 1970s as Spanish society felt the effects of modernisation and the desire to 'be like other Europeans' grew (Díez-Nicolás, 2003: 119), helps explain this apparent contradiction. Despite the dictatorship's attempts to distance Spain from a European modernity, which they saw as socially and culturally corrupted by socialism and liberalism (Crespo MacLennan, 2004: 50-53), the feeling that Europe was the solution to Spain's problems was reinforced during the latter stages of the regime. An increasing receptiveness towards European ideas and cultural products following the Stabilisation Plan intensified this belief amongst most Spaniards; the lack of legitimacy of the regime had become almost part of the consciousness of Spanish society (permeating even into some conservative elites that had previously backed the regime (Powell, 1990: 253)), and it was regarded as essentially immoral (Cotarelo, 1992: 7). In short, the 'onslaught of northern European culture' in Spain – due to migration patterns, tourism and cultural exports – around the time of its transition to democracy (Wiarda, 1989: 176) contributed towards the notion in Spain that Europe implied – as said in the first chapter – 'cultural, political, social and psychological interconnections as well as economic ones' (*ibid*: 175).

With this in mind, then, we need to analyse what this European onslaught meant for Spain's democratisation process. Why are social and cultural links to Europe relevant? It seems clear that there is a sociocultural dimension to democratisation and indeed to the process of European

integration. Of course the fact that there is a sociocultural dimension to European integration that consciously attempts to reinforce a certain European identity, does not mean that there has been a decrease in national allegiance as integration has advanced (or even as a by-product of globalisation (Balfour and Quiroga, 2007: 12)); but it is still possible to identify the emergence of a secondary allegiance to 'Europe' (Milward, 1997: 15). This growth in allegiance towards Europe may not directly equate to the development of a cultural identity in the traditional sense (i.e. the nation), yet there is a sense that the 'idea of Europe' has 'percolated through the complex populations of the European continent' and that it has been "refracted" through the prism of daily interactions' (Herzfeld, 2002: 145). The sense that Europe is a political and cultural ideal just as much as it is a geographical space (Lovell, 2003: 122) is certainly not new. Whilst there seems to be a common set of values emerging from what could be perceived as a single European origin (recognised by the European Commission (2006:36)) – in itself questionable of course – described as the 'Athens-Rome-Jerusalem' progression (*ibid*: 121; Shore, 1993: 792) (or to paraphrase Emmanuel Levinas, 'Europe is the Bible and the Greeks' (Morgan, 2011: 186)), it is actually very hard to attest the existence of a European culture.

Yet, one could easily say that the formation of the European Communities was 'accompanied by an ideology of "Europeaness"' (Pocock, 2002: 301). The fact that a European 'super-state' is still very far from being a reality, however, also seems to indicate that there is no such thing as a homogeneous European identity or culture. In fact, there is an argument to be made about how the pressures inherent in the process of economic integration have led to further social divisions within the EU. Divergences in economic performance between countries (the PIGS and the rest, or those in the Euro-zone and those outside, for example) as well as within regions in the same country (West and East Germany for instance) have led to – particularly since the increase of regional funds in the mid 1980s has encouraged regions to act as lobbyists and sometimes 'compete against each other over resources and for influence' (Bourne, 2007: 291) – a reinterpretation of the European project as a process of differentiation rather than one of homogenisation (Hudson, 2000: 413-414).

Although I agree with the notion that European identity will probably not be strong enough in the near future to challenge individual nationalisms, it is also clear that Europe – particularly in the 1970s and 1980s – has been a significant sociocultural entity that has had a singular effect on its members and its periphery (Herzfeld, 2002: 145-148). After all is said and done, there is no denying that Spain's transition was a success not only because of its ability to consolidate democratic institutions and a successful market economy in record time, but also because it succeeded in 'inducing cultural changes that made it part of the European community of nations' (Encarnación, 2001:61). Ironically, the fact that Spain's current problems with its

democratic regime are a mirror image of the rest of Europe's, seems to support the notion that Spain was very successful in consolidating the European model of democracy.

What is more, a cultural dimension has long been a part of the project of European integration. There is little doubt that the institutional construction of Europe has, very much since its beginnings, been 'accompanied by an increasing feeling of uncertainty over just what it [is] that represent[s] Europe particularity in the cultural field and what it mean[s] to be European' (Passerini, 2002: 193). That uncertainty hindered, to an extent, the EEC's ability to implement specific strategies aimed at developing a coherent cultural policy, but it also shows that this dimension has always been considered. It was not until the rather disappointing turnout in the first ever European elections of 1979 (although the Commission was rather disappointed at the time, we should note that the 61.99 per cent turn out in that election remains the highest to date) that the Commission finally decided that a coherent set of cultural policies had to be devised (Shore, 1993: 779). The fruits of these efforts are found in article 128 of the Maastricht Treaty, which calls on all member states to bring a 'common cultural heritage to the fore' and establishes mechanisms for cooperation in the cultural arena. However, even as early as the 1980s, when the 'People's Europe Project' was launched, the Commission was already attempting to construct a European culture. As part of this 'orchestrated attempt to create and nurture "new symbols of European identity"', the Commission hired a professional PR firm to 'analyse "motivational dynamics related to Europeanisation"' (*ibid*: 788). It was as part of this project that the European Flag was designed, the European Anthem (based on Beethoven's *Ode to Joy*) was written, European driver's licenses and passports were introduced, the concept of European citizenship was developed, and the new European gift shops started to appear around Brussels. Programmes such as the European Heritage Days and the Cultural Capitals of Europe were likewise implemented by the Council of Europe as part of this coordinated attempt to raise the 'awareness of the public about the multiple values' of the European 'common heritage and the continuous need for its protection' (European Heritage Day website).

The sudden emergence of a policy aimed at strengthening the sense of 'Europeanness' is evidence of the existence of a cultural dimension to the process of European integration. This cultural dimension had an influence in the way Spain was transformed, in particular, during the time when its democracy was being consolidated. There is no doubt that, as I have said before, the modernisation of the country played a key part in many of the transformations at social, cultural and mass value levels. Yet we must also consider that although modernisation contributes towards cultural changes in the same general direction, 'the diversity in basic cultural values' partly explains 'the huge differences that exist in how institutions perform in societies around the world' (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005: 4). Modernisation explains the generalities of cultural and social change but it is not the only independent variable.

During the transition years there was a growing sense that the Spanish national identity had to be redesigned in order to fit with Europe's common interest, and also with Europe's common identity and institutional frameworks (Farrell, 2005: 215). As we will see in the next sections, this desire to 'catch up' with Europe at the social and cultural levels played a key part in shaping Spain's democracy. The distinctly postmodern dimension to European culture and identity implied that for Spaniards to become European they had to embrace some of the most salient characteristics of the European 'culture'. There is no doubt that a European 'culture' cannot be easily compared to national cultures since Europe, as a political and economic unit, lacks the resources and strategies that were (and to an extent still are) available to nation-states in their bids to create common identities and cultures. Nation-states are probably modernity's main political contribution, whilst the European project feels distinctly postmodern (or post nation-state). And in this postmodern understanding of identities, these are 'constantly being renegotiated' as the challenges to traditional identities (globalisation, American cultural dominance, immigration, etcetera) are continuously increasing (Balfour and Quiroga, 2007: 11). Furthermore, 'individualism has long been a stereotype of European identity' (Herzfield, 2002: 139). This inherently European individualism, which is a part of Europe's common identity that Spaniards were trying to replicate, is closely linked with a European tradition that emphasises self-expression over survival values (to put it in Inglehart's terms), and which hinders the ability to create a culture by utilising the repressive capabilities available to the state. After all there are no European myths capable of shaping a feeling of belonging that can be compared to the national myths (Milward, 1997), and there seems to be no clear way to create such myths. Or as Anthony Smith eloquently put it: 'who will feel European in the depths of their being, and who will willingly sacrifice themselves for so abstract an ideal? In short, who will die for Europe?' (Smith, 1995: 139). Despite the fact that a European culture, in the traditional sense, is far from being consolidated and widely accepted, there is no doubt that Europe as a project has had a strong sociocultural component. NAFTA, on the other hand, is a completely different story.

Robert Pastor, as one of the staunchest defenders of NAFTA, has called for leaders in Canada, Mexico and the United States to begin developing strategies and policies that take under consideration the 'North American idea'. Pastor argues that this 'idea' is simply the realisation that all three countries would be better off designing together 'a continental future' and developing 'a genuine partnership that goes beyond a rhetoric to a clear definition of a community in North America' (Pastor, 2011: xiv). Although I agree with his overall argument that further cooperation and even some degree of supranational (or at least multinational/intergovernmental) institutionalisation is desperately required, one would be forgiven for finding the emergence of something like a North American idea hard to imagine. Unlike the European experience, the three North American countries do not share many of the

components that could construct a shared supranational identity, let alone culture. One only has to read Samuel Huntington's (2004) last major work to realise how difficult the task of developing a North American community would be. In Huntington's view, there is a crisis of national identity in the United States that is caused, along with subnational and transnational identities, by the emergence of non-American national identities (specifically Mexican and Latin American) that – unlike the immigrants from the past who 'wept with joy when, after overcoming hardship and risk, [they] saw the Statue of Liberty' and became 'the most intensely patriotic citizens' (*ibid*: 5) – do not feel loyal or identify themselves with the United States.

There are, of course, those who have a more positive or at least pragmatic view towards Mexican immigration. After all, it was during the 1980s and 1990s in particular, that the insatiable need for low-skilled labour in the United States facilitated mass migration; the expanding economy meant that any number of immigrants (legal and illegal) could easily find work in the buoyant service industry (hotels, restaurants, bars and entertainment centres), as well as the rural jobs traditionally reserved for Mexican labour. By some estimates, up to 50 per cent of the new jobs that were created during the 1990s were taken by new comers to the United States, the majority of which were Mexicans (Davidow, 2003: 178-179). The problems many in the United States have with Mexican immigration, as Huntington's work suggests, has to do with more than sheer numbers. The question of identity is at the forefront of the debate.

A quick comparison with the European experience is rather enlightening. In the case of the project of European integration, the emergence of a secondary (to the national identity) European identity has had a very specific influence in the policies and attitudes towards immigration (Pastor, 2011: 66). Although not without its problems, the free flow of labour within Europe had a positive effect on the consolidation of Spanish democracy. Spain's experience as a sender of migrants to Northern Europe – from the 1950s onwards guest workers' programmes in France, Germany and Switzerland facilitated emigration to these countries (Encarnación, 2004: 175) – positively contributed to its transition to democracy. Besides the issue of remittances, emigration to Northern Europe, allowed a great number of Spaniards – according to different estimates anything between a quarter of a million (Balfour, 2000: 279) and over a million (Encarnación, 2004: 175) emigrated to Northern Europe between roughly 1960 and 1974 – to interact with other democratic societies and, to an extent, learn from this experience. The end of the economic boom in Northern Europe coupled with the Spanish economy's impressive performance through the 1980s and the increasing liberalisation of the political regime encouraged many of those living abroad to relocate to Spain (more than one million between 1973 and 1980) (*ibid*), and thus bring with them many of the attitudes and practices learned abroad. Spain's status as a former emigrant nation has also contributed towards Spaniards' attitudes towards new immigration from Northern Africa and Latin

America; in fact human rights organisations and NGOs defending immigrants represent one of the few sectors of civil society that has developed (*ibid.*: 176).

On the other hand, despite the United States' rhetoric as an immigrant nation, and as a welcoming land of opportunity and equality, the laws that gave preference to white European immigrants were only abolished in 1965. Up until then Latin Americans, Asians and Africans could not fairly compete for the limited number of visas available (Davidow, 2003: 180). There is certainly a lot of truth to the assessment that a customs union or a common market – which would invariably lead towards freeing labour flows – is hindered by the asymmetry between the three nations (Miller and Stefanova, 2004: 509-510). Yet, on second examination, it seems that there may be more to it. Romania's GDP per capita (all in constant 2005 US dollars) in 2000 (when accession negotiations with the EU were opened), for instance, was \$3,339 compared to Britain's \$33,689 – over ten times Romania's GDP per capita. By 2004, when Romania was accepted into the EU, the gap had narrowed but Britain's GDP per capita was still over eight and a half times larger than Romania's. The United States' GDP per capita in 2000 (when North American integration was supposedly at its height) was less than five and half times that of Mexico. As the Romanian example elucidates, asymmetry in levels of development is definitely a challenge (the UK took steps to minimise immigration for instance) but it is not an insurmountable one. In the case of Romania, the EU had political, historical and strategic interests to work towards minimising the effects of asymmetry (Pridham, 2001). Claiming that NAFTA's only challenge to integration is the asymmetry between Mexico and the United States would be a gross simplification. It is not easy to know if NAFTA has or will, by increasing the levels of transactions between the citizens in the three countries, actually lead to 'greater similarities in values' between them (Inglehart *et al.*, 1996: 18), which could lead to a change in views towards immigration and even possibly to the development of a common culture... but it seems unlikely. According to Inglehart's 'cultural maps' (World Values Survey website), the values of Mexican society have moved only slightly closer to those of the citizens in the United States and Canada, but it is impossible to know if this is due to the peculiarities of NAFTA or to those generally associated with modernisation.

Similarly, a quick analysis of the opinion Mexicans hold of the United States in general does not seem to back the argument that anything resembling a cultural coming together is taking place. In the 2010 Latinobarometro only 6.3 per cent of Mexican respondents held a very positive opinion of the United States – the lowest number in the region – whilst 9.8 per cent had a very negative image – the highest in the region. If anything, the relationship at social level seems to be getting worse: in 1995 12.5 per cent of Mexicans had a very positive view of the United States and only 4.7 per cent had a very negative image – below the average number of respondents for the whole region. This data (figure 6.1) also seems to suggest that the time

when Mexicans' positive opinion of the United States was at its highest level was between 2000 and 2002, a time when, according to Robert Pastor, North America was 'almost as integrated as Europe was after fifty years' (2011: 19). However, soon after the 9/11 attacks, as the governments in the three countries failed to develop common security strategies, the 'integrationist' trend in North America was stopped in its tracks. The distinct lack of a coherent institutional framework under NAFTA did not facilitate a coordination of policies between the three governments to tackle the security problem at regional level, which would have surely been the better option. Instead, the unilateral measures taken by the United States regarding security led to the old problems and grudges relating to the border regions to re-emerge and even intensify (*ibid*: 5). This partly explains why in 2003 and 2004 the image of the United States in Mexico was so negative. It could be argued that this reverse in regional cooperation led to a change in attitudes that brought people in Mexico and the United States further apart than they had been before; thus partially lending credence to the view that greater interaction leads to greater understanding between societies, which in turn leads to further integration.

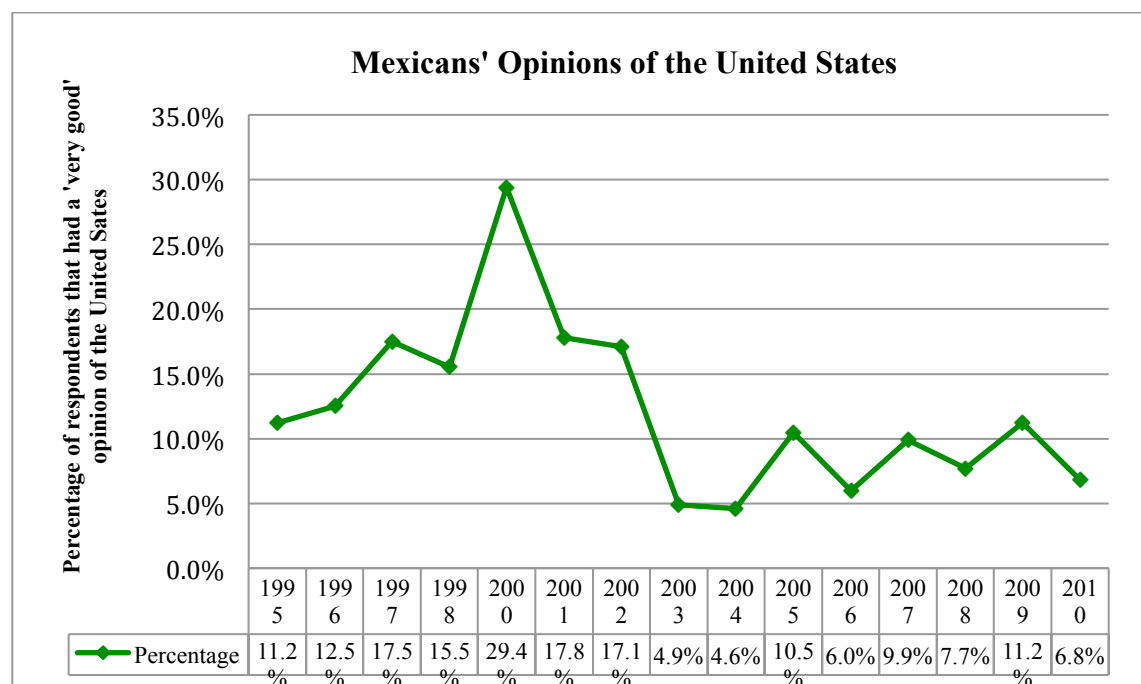


Figure 6.1. Percentage of Mexican sample that had a 'very good opinion' of the United States. Latinobarometro, 2012.

Besides considering the real impact the specific context at a particular time may have in the bilateral relations at social level (for example the passing of Arizona's controversial immigration Law SB 1070 in 2010, the War in Iraq in 2003, or the tougher border controls that were implemented following 9/11), we also have to accept that the sociocultural differences between Mexico and the rest of North America are considerable. Certainly I do not agree with Huntington's exaggerated vision of Mexico's identity being a threat to American society, yet we cannot ignore the cultural differences. Although in Mexico, as in the rest of Latin America, the

global liberalism that emerged triumphant in the 1990s has come to dominate the political discourse – in the whole of Latin America democracy and the market (albeit not every aspect, privatisation of state industries, as mentioned before, remains controversial) are understood as ‘values of universal applicability’ just as they would almost anywhere else (Whitehead, 2010: 57) – it is unclear if this will lead to a societal transformation that would get Mexico closer to the sort of cultural kinships with North America that could lead to a common identity. This perfected and ‘all-encompassing’ version of liberalism, which is fairly homogenous around the world, implies a consensus around some basic issues including the wisdom of liberalising trade and investment across borders. This consensus does not exist for the liberalisation of labour though (*ibid*: 58). Although in Europe labour was also liberalised, the experience there suggests that integration produced a reinforcing cycle: increasing interaction between societies, leads to greater similarities in values, which in turn leads to further rationalisation for free trade and integration.

In the case of Europe, there is little doubt that identity, as well as material considerations, has been a factor that needs to be considered when analysing the rationalisation behind Europe’s integration process; the decision to open labour flows within Europe could not have been reached following economic considerations alone. In fact, some steps towards European integration – albeit not all of them as some of the most sensationalist sections of the British anti-European media would like us believe (Booker and North, 2005: 225) – have been taken despite economic considerations. When Jacques Delors pushed for the EMU to be implemented, he was, apparently, warned by economists from the Commission about the perils of such a bold move without first securing some sort of fiscal union (*The Telegraph* 16/11/2010). Following the motto so often pinned on him of a ‘beneficial crisis’ (*The Telegraph* 2/6/2012), Delors pushed forward with the project in the hope that any crisis emerging from the contradiction of having a common currency without a common fiscal policy would only lead to further European integration. Although this feels like an exaggerated version of events – Delors himself has defended the EMU project by claiming its failure has to do with its execution rather than its architecture (*The Telegraph* 2/12/2011) – it is clear that there was a wider rationalisation in the process of monetary union than mere economic gains. The argument that in North America the main stumbling block to further economic integration – the next logical step towards ‘positive integration’ would be, as put forward by Vicente Fox in his ‘NAFTA plus’ proposal, a customs area – is the asymmetry between the three countries, needs to be reconsidered. This asymmetry does lead to a ‘complex interdependence’ (Inglehart *et al.*, 1996: 19) that is far more difficult to overcome than it was in Europe, yet still a move towards further integration feels improbable not only because of the obvious issues emerging from these structural conditions but also because of sociocultural issues and the question of identity.

There is no doubt that the cases of Spain and Mexico are, again, very different. The process that took place as Spain integrated with the European Community in the 1980s was more about Spain regaining its place in Europe rather than Spain 'becoming' European. A similar development in North America would have to consider, besides the obvious structural constraints, that the sociocultural differences and the apparent lack of anything resembling a North American identity would make further integration harder than it was in Europe. Indeed, it has been claimed that despite the clear 'cultural and social penetration' of American values and culture 'in everyday Mexican life' (Levy and Bruhn, 2006: 31), as well as the 'chicanisation' of American cities, the increasing interaction between the two nations and the homogenising influences, Mexico and the United States remain 'ethically, culturally, socially, economically and politically' (*ibid*: 33) completely different.

Having said this though, much as structural conditions can be transformed (a narrowing of the development gap between the United States and Mexico is not too hard to imagine) so can mass values and identities. As said in the previous section, the European Commission developed a detailed policy program aimed at strengthening the cultural links between European countries in an attempt to emphasise their shared 'Europeaness'. Certainly this attempt to foster a common regional identity was facilitated by a historical and sociocultural kinship, yet there is no denying that much of this secondary identity has been constructed.

What is more, it seems that differences in mass values do not preclude a group of nations from developing a common identity. After all, the differences in social and mass values between, say, Spain and Sweden are probably greater than those between the United States and Mexico (figure 6.2). Yet, the Eurobarometer wave conducted in the same year as Inglehart and Baker (2000) published their cultural map – which shows a considerable difference in both the traditional/secular and survival/self-expression values between the two countries – shows that Sweden and Spain had a noticeably high level of attachment to Europe (74 and 72 per cent respectively). Obviously their clear 'cultural' differences did not preclude Spaniards and Swedes from sharing a sense of 'being' European. In the same Eurobarometer wave, people in Spain and Germany showed similar levels of belonging to a European identity; 76 per cent and 60 per cent of respondents in Spain and Germany, respectively, felt either completely European or a combination of a national and a European identity. This is also despite both countries showing marked differences at mass value level¹. Again, 'cultural' differences did not seem to get in the way of Spaniards and Germans sharing a common European identity. In a similar vein, in the 2003 Latinobarometro only 25.7 per cent of Mexicans admitted to feeling 'really

¹ It would be fair to assume that in the case of Spain the strength of this identification with Europe is explained by the fact that 'for much of the twentieth century and in particular under the Franco dictatorship [Europe] signified modernity and democracy for Spaniards who aspired to both' (Balfour and Quiroga, 2007: 163).

close' to Latin America as a region, yet almost 60 per cent of respondents (well above Chile and Argentina) said they felt very proud of their 'Hispanic culture'. Clearly, then, a cultural affinity or the sharing of mass values is not a pre-condition to developing a common identity, just as sharing some cultural characteristics does not guarantee the development of a common identity. Common identities can be constructed from below by increasing interactions between societies, as well as from above by introducing policies that emphasise similarities.

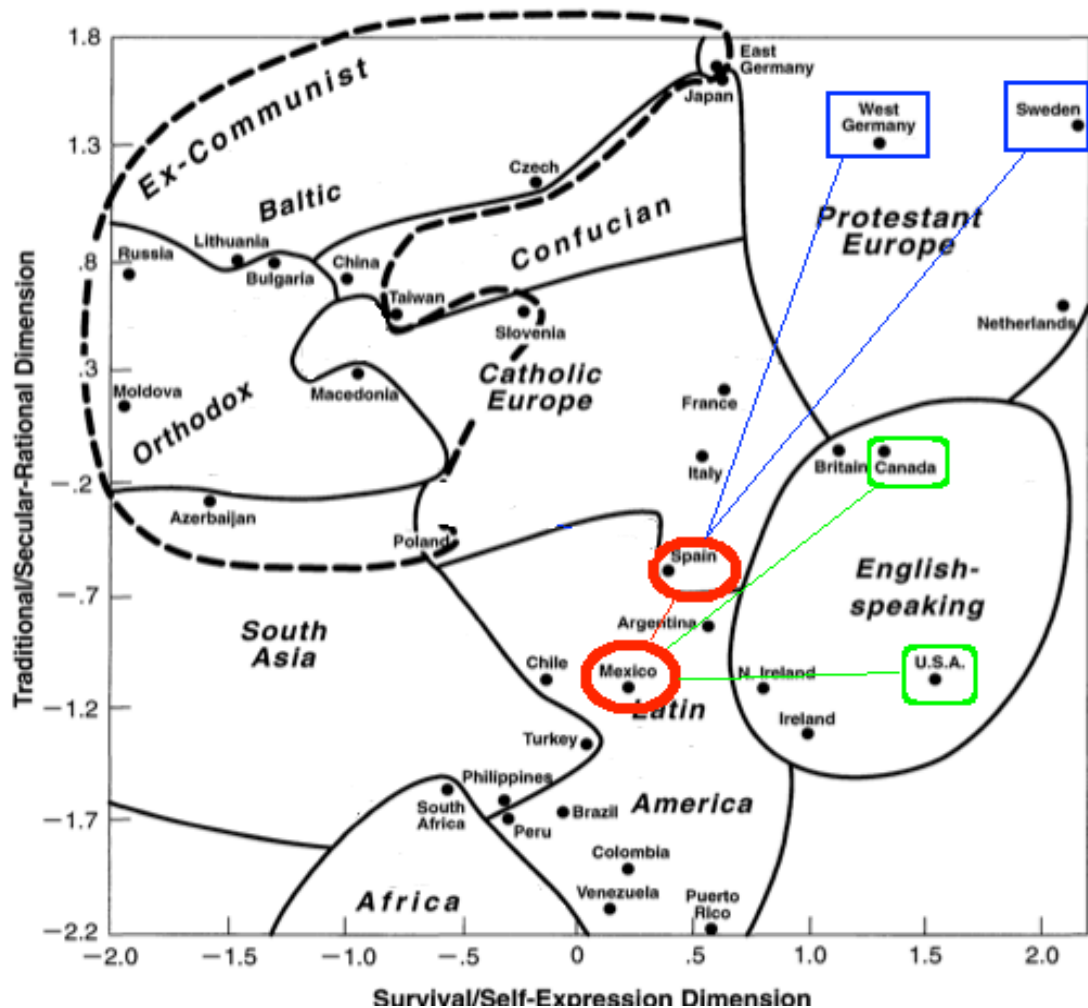


Figure 6.2. Ronald Inglehart and Wayne E. Baker, 2000: 29; modified by the author

Notwithstanding the clear cultural implications inherent in furthering the links of economic interdependence between the three countries, NAFTA completely ignored the social dimension and the consequences that an increase in free trade would have at social level. This is highly unusual considering Canadian fears, in particular, regarding the effects economic integration with the United States would have at a sociocultural level. Although in Mexico some similar concerns regarding the incursion of American cultural values (and products) were raised during the negotiation stages, the economic rewards and/or risks were so overwhelming that they almost completely dominated the debate (Taylor, 2001: 51). In the case of Canada, however, the concern that an asymmetric integration with the United States would lead to a dilution of Canada's political sovereignty and even its cultural identity was far more pronounced; Canada

is a relatively young country divided by strong regionalisms and where national identity is often subordinated to regional considerations (*ibid*: 47-49). Further interaction with the United States would lead, according to some, to an American social and cultural dominance in the region. Unlike the Mexican-American border, the American-Canadian border does not have its own border culture; whilst the presence of both Mexican and American cultural constructs in the border region (which in turn leads to a border identity) helps ease the concerns over American cultural dominance in Mexico, this does not happen in Canada. In that sense, Canadians are probably most concerned when it comes down to cultural integration. Yet, instead of trying to solve the issue by including some sort of cultural provisions or legislation within NAFTA, the three countries, following the prevailing dynamic of minimalist integration, chose to ignore it.

6.3. The social dimension of the Spanish and Mexican transitions to democracy

Spain has long been hailed as an example of how to achieve a democratic transition through consensus at elite level, which apparently often results in a peaceful transfer of power. Yet we must now recognise that pacts at elite level cannot guarantee that democracy will prevail (Bejarano, 2011: 18-19; Edles, 1995: 355-356; Huntington, 1991: 141) – much depends on what kind of pacts are being reached (as discussed in the previous chapter) and how these are being reached². Analysing social changes, therefore, is more than a mere caprice; it actually allows us to understand why elites opted for moderation over confrontation, and why we cannot see the Spanish transition – nor the Mexican for that matter – as merely an enlightened ‘velvet’ transition that took place independently from societal pressures (Ortega Ortiz, 2008: 37). Certainly the personality of political leaders played an important part, but allowing this to be the only explanation presupposes a degree of subjectivity that is not explained by elite theory (Edles, 1995: 359). In a similar vein, saying simply that authoritarian/democratic regimes are explained solely by authoritarian/democratic cultures holds a similarly limited explanatory value (Ortega Ortiz, 2008: 28). Understanding social changes (in values, public opinion and social capital), as well as how these shape and are shaped by structural considerations and elite calculations, is necessary to understand the Spanish and Mexican transitions. If – as strict structuralist and elitist theories of democratisation presume – the underlying motivating factor is ‘the desire on the actor’s part to maximise utility’ (Edles, 1998: 13), then how could we explain, for instance, that whilst the Socialists and Catalans decided, under pressure from below, to move towards consensus, the Basque nationalists decided the opposite (Edles, 1995: 369-370)? Certainly the Basque leaders stood to ‘win’ as much as the Catalan or Socialist leaders. The

² According to Ana María Bejarano (2011: 87), the role pacts will eventually play in political outcomes (i.e. the type of regime) largely depend on three features: ‘(1) the degrees of inclusion and exclusion with regard to its signatories; (2) the nature and scope of the restrictions they impose on the future development of the political regime; and (3) the duration of degree of institutional entrenchment of these same restrictions’.

calculations of the leadership are not taken in a vacuum; they need to account for the support they can garner. In the Basque case, for instance, the general atmosphere of 'consensus' that reigned in Spain after Franco's death was somehow overpowered by a focus on the past and a hardened approach to negotiations influenced by the years of repression under Franco (Edles, 1998: 129-138). Even if the Basque leaders would have preferred consensus based solely upon their 'rational' calculations of self-interest – in itself questionable – there is no telling whether they could have achieved this without popular support.

Spain's consensus-based transition has also been blamed for weakening some of the new democratic institutions. Whilst some of the institutions that directly emerged from the elite pacts during the transition evolved to become strongly democratic, other institutions and practices (often linked with political culture) suffered from this process and retained an authoritarian legacy. Although this is a bigger problem in the case of Mexico (Merino, 2003: 15), the Spanish elite-driven and consensual transition may have allowed for the peaceful solution of many conflicts and clashes of interests, but it also left the door open for poor or uneven institutionalisation when consensus could not be reached (Field and Hamann, 2008). In the Spanish case, the electoral system, the political party system and the parliamentary government were areas transformed by pacts and an even institutionalisation. On the other hand, the territorial politics (decentralisation) and the politics of industrial relations were not entirely solved by consensus and as such have evolved within a weak institutional framework (*ibid*). Spanish political decentralisation has been, as seen in the third chapter, an extra-institutional process (according to the 1978 Constitution Spain is not a federal state) achieved through the sort of negotiating, competing, bargaining and political strategizing that can only exist in a loose institutional framework (Colomer, 1998: 40). But at least the regionalisation process in Spain has taken place within the wider process of democratisation. The 'frozen democracy' hypothesis, on the contrary, offers the worrisome view that one key risk inherent in pacted transitions is that whatever negative side effects these kind of transitions may lead to, they will be hard to correct. For instance, in the Spanish case the pacted nature of the transition has, to an extent, led to a stifling of political competition as it is the same elites that originally pacted the transition who remain in power; this in turn can lead to a disenchantment with democracy at social level which can hamper transformations in political culture (Encarnación, 2008: 43-44). Although some claim that very little about the democratic development in Spain supports the 'freezing' hypothesis (*ibid*: 44), others claim that the 'viability of Spanish democracy' has been achieved 'at some cost to its quality' (McDonough *et al.*, 1998a: 1).

In any case, the question of whether or not Spain should be considered a frozen democracy needs to be seriously considered. The previous chapter already explained how pacted transitions should not be considered as a panacea for successful democratisation. In fact, it has been argued

that pactured transitions can undermine democratic ideals and practices, have negative consequences for economic development, strengthen or maintain clientilistic networks, foster corruption, limit political competition and limit the positive influence of civil society (Encarnación, 2005:183). In the Spanish case, the pactured nature of the transition allowed many of the regime's key institutions to survive the transition almost intact. Even more importantly, during the 'negotiating stages' of the democratic process (say from 1977 to 1979) some key institutions including the police, the armed forces, the judiciary and local governments had not been reformed in the slightest. This gave the conservative forces – the military and security apparatus in particular – an important veto power, which in many ways shaped the transition (Field, 2011: 2). It could be said, then, that non-democrats negotiated the Spanish transition to democracy. This is particularly relevant for this study since, as argued by Frances Hagopian (1990: 148-149), 'patterns of politics established in periods of transition have a very real and strong potential to become semipermanent features of the political landscape', and transitions represent unique opportunities ('critical junctures') that once missed are seldom regained. On top of this, the history of democratic failures in Spain that led to the horrors of the Civil War shaped the democratisation process; the transition managed to, in many ways, bring together the 'two Spains', which gives the 1978 Constitution an even greater symbolic value (Magone, 2009: 430). All these means it is very hard for the Spanish political system to change or evolve. Regardless of the inadequacies that may characterise the transition process (e.g. the demobilisation of Spanish civil society, the 'conservative' nature of the process, the '*pacto del olvido*' and the incomplete institutionalisation of the Spanish autonomic model), the political system that emerged from it is here to stay.

Even if the 'freezing hypothesis' of Spanish democracy is sternly contested (Encarnación, 2005 and 2008), events in the last few years seem to have put in evidence many of the shortcomings of the Spanish democratic system, and we have to acknowledge that these can be directly traced to the transition process. However, although the freezing hypothesis may bring into question the quality of Spanish democracy and the success of its transition, Mexico's democracy has been as negatively impacted (or even more so) by the 'micro-pacts' that characterise its transition. It has been said in previous chapters that Mexico's democratisation has resembled a fight of attrition at micro-institutional level (Aguayo Quezada, 2010a: 25; Merino, 2003; Ortega Ortiz, 2001: 269-270). If anything, the greater capacity by the PRI regime to incorporate wider sectors of society meant that the transition was even more determined by elite bargaining and the resulting institutional reforms than it was in Spain. Unlike the Franco Regime, the PRI had the tools available to 'integrate' an even broader range of social movements and represent their interests; the PRI successfully integrated the left wing and conservative sections of society by, for instance, considering mass-labour's demands in the decision-making process (Middlebrook, 1995), but also reaching pacts with the rent-seeking

coalitions that, as discussed before, allowed them to make huge profit by supporting the regime (Haber *et al.*, 2008: 9-11). The fact that in Mexico the politically organised opposition to the regime has been 'loyal' greatly contributed towards the almost complete demobilisation of society; more so than in Spain, political parties and elites in Mexico had to work within the existing institutions in an attempt to transform them (Ortega Ortiz, 2001: 269-270). In Mexico there has been minimal creation of new democratic institutions or even drastic transformation of the existing ones; the change in the 'rules of the game' was about making the existing institutions work rather than changing them (Merino, 2003: 15). Whilst Spain passed a new constitution, inaugurated a new Parliament and transformed its political party system (with the emergence of a new centre-right party), Mexico's current constitution was ratified in 1917, the main institutions remain fairly unchanged and the two parties that have held power in the last hundred years are the same ones that have dominated the political landscape in Mexico since 1939. In Mexico, the freezing hypothesis seems to hold more validity. The strengthening of political parties during the last 50 years of reforms has, as discussed at length in the third chapter, led to political parties being just as concerned with maintaining the status quo as the PRI regime (Aguayo Quezada, 2010a: 32). Instead of supporting mass mobilisation and civic engagement, all political parties seek to limit it, as it could jeopardise the power they have gained through decades of political struggle.

Due to the pacted/negotiated nature of both transitions, the sociocultural dimension of both processes has, in my opinion, been under-analysed. However, the many problems that can be directly traced to the nature of the Spanish and Mexican transitions make it necessary to reconsider the role society played in the process. In the Spanish case, for instance, there is a view that highlights how the lack of a broad structural-institutional break with Francoism, in particular during the immediate years after the transition, stopped the sort of social transformation that leads to democratic consolidation. Some went as far as claiming that Spanish political culture remained inexorably authoritarian (Rodríguez Ibañez, 1987: 34) or at least not entirely democratic (Wiarda, 1989: 9). As has been mentioned before, however, by the time of Franco's death Spanish society had already been fundamentally transformed by the effects of the process of socioeconomic modernisation (urbanisation, industrialisation, etcetera) as well as by mass migration patterns, tourism and the overall increase in contact with the developed democratic nations in Western societies (Balfour, 2000: 284). Between 1971 and 1978, for instance, the percentage of Spaniards enrolled in tertiary education almost trebled (from 8.7 per cent to 23.5 per cent) – not to mention that the ratio of female to male enrolled in higher education almost doubled (World Bank Databank, 2013e). Religiosity also fell sharply in the same period, and divorce was legalised in 1981 with over 80 per cent of the population supporting the move. Hence, even if ignoring the whole cognitive element of political culture and disregarding the effect institutions have in shaping culture (Crespo, 20; Lijphart, 1980;

Magone, 1996: 175), I still do not agree with the view that the values of Spanish society were inexorably authoritarian after its transition. To say this would be to ignore the widely accepted consequences economic development had in generating a range of 'values and attitudes' that 'conflicted with those of the regime' (Balfour, 2000: 283), as well as ignoring the clear correlation between institutional changes and changes in the political culture.

Yet, it is also true that the 'advent of democracy in Spain did not prove especially auspicious for the rise of a vibrant civil society' (Encarnación, 2008: 70). If anything, Spain's transition, as said repeatedly, stands out for its consensual nature, abandonment of maximalism and low levels of mass mobilisation – at least from 1978 onwards. Indeed until fairly recently Spanish democracy suffered from alarmingly low levels of political engagement and participation. This lack of engagement in politics is seen as a by-product of Spain's weak civil society in democracy; by the time democracy was being consolidated civil society in general was, with the exception of during the 1981 failed coup attempt (Ortega Ortiz, 2001: 291), fairly demobilised. A lack of participation and engagement in politics is clearly a problem for any democratic country, but it is particularly troublesome in those countries with emerging democracies (Hiskey and Bowler, 2005: 58). In any case, the feeble state of Spain's civil society and low levels of social capital is partly a consequence of the rejection of maximalism that characterised the transition (McDonough *et al.*, 1998a: 3) – which implied the demobilisation of society at the very point when the strengthening of civil society seemed most likely (Encarnación, 2008: 69) – as well as a consequence of the legacies of Francoism and the 'corporatisation' of society that resulted from the regime's attempts to create artificial forms of civic engagement (*ibid.*: 70).

This does not mean, as said before, that the Spanish transition occurred in a vacuum free from any sort of social mobilisations or societal pressures. Indeed there were some important social mobilisations in urban centres during the years preceding the transition. During the 1960s, for instance, the official workers (*Organización Sindical* – OS) and students (*Sindicato Español Universitario* – SEU) organisations of the regime were infiltrated by clandestine opposition groups and managed to stage protest movements during the 1960s, yet these were vehemently repressed by the regime (Aguilar, 2000: 305). However, neither the OS nor the SEU were ever able to completely shake off their Francoist tag and as such were unable to lead real opposition social movements. Nevertheless, the changes introduced by the regime in the economic sphere – combined with some weak cosmetic reforms introduced during the mid 1960s that attempted to bring the state apparatus in tune with the new social reality of Spain – opened some important opportunities for some social movements to emerge (mainly trade disputes and strikes) in some of the main industrial centres in Spain (Balfour, 1989: 142-143). In many ways the economic growth experienced during the 1960s had been achieved without having to undergo any real structural reforms within the regime, particularly in social issues.

Thus, even though the country was rapidly developing and there was a marked increase in the standard of living of the population, labour conditions remained poor; unemployment benefits covered only 30 per cent of the salary as late as 1972, safety conditions in the workplace were precarious at best and the contributions paid to the official trade union (OS) were far greater than any benefits received from it (Sartorius and Sabio, 2007: 51-53). At the same time, the labour movement in Spain (shaped in no small measure by the PCE leadership) underwent a 'cultural' transformation. The focus changed from an out-dated 'revolutionary' rhetoric to a focus on specific social issues and goals (*ibid*: 53-54). Hence, despite the fact that strikes were still to be legalised by 1976, the number of working days lost because of industrial action in Spain was almost three times higher than the average for EC countries, where industrial action was legal (Martín García, 2010: 51).

The strikes and labour mobilisations also opened opportunities for other social forces to join in the cycle of contestation in the very early years of the democratisation process (from 1974 until 1977); students, the clergy and nationalist also started to mobilise against the dictatorship. This broader mobilisation was initially repressed by the police forces, which only helped to deteriorate the image of the dictatorship outside Spain even further (*ibid*: 52-53). This in turn opened more windows of opportunity for the opposition forces to mobilise. In a first instance, the labour and student movements that dominated the social landscape during the Arias Navarro and the first Suárez governments were characterised by a radical and *rupturista* stance, which both drove and set the boundaries for the democratic process (Soto, 2005: 447-448). In many ways, then, the social movements during the early stages of the transition that were characterised by a 'brief but intense cycle of protest influenced short-term political events and even shaped some of the longer-term characteristics of political culture in contemporary Spain' (Sánchez León, 2011: 95). This interpretation of the Spanish transition 'from below' certainly seems to challenge the 'official' version of events, i.e. that the transition was as a controlled and planned process carried out by the political elites from both sides (Francoist and the opposition). The high levels of mobilisation between 1974 and 1977 seem to suggest that, at least at the very beginning, there was no clear plan or programme that was being followed but that key decisions were taken on the go, shaped in great measure by social mobilisations (Quirosa-Cheyouze y Muñoz, 2007: 17-19). Having said this though, there is no denying that following the Moncloa pacts of October 1977 and the *de facto* abandonment of the *rupturista* option by the PCE, the social effervescence that typified the early years of the transition and the last years of the dictatorship was replaced by social disengagement. The clear support for the CCOO in the February 1978 elections for trade union representatives – the first democratic elections of this sort in over 40 years – was a clear indication that workers were contempt with subordinating short-term goals in favour of the democratic consolidation (Sartorius and Sabio, 2007: 141). The subsequent decline in trade union membership and participation guaranteed that the

'consolidation' of democracy took place in an environment almost entirely unrestricted by social protest.

In any case, Mexico, much as it happened in Spain, went through important social transformations in the 1950s and 1960s driven by an aggressive process of modernisation and economic expansion (Ortega Ortiz, 2001: 302; 2008: 157). In both cases, it is worth mentioning, modernisation did lead to the emergence of social pressures that were to challenge the regime; the difference is that whilst Francoism quickly collapsed, the PRI regime went on to survive for another three decades. Although this may imply that Spanish civil society was better organised or that, indeed, Spaniards were more supportive of democracy than Mexicans, the reality is that one would struggle to find evidence that suggests the Spanish citizenry was particularly well organised or mobilised, particularly after 1978. Indeed, for whatever reason, it seems that civil society in both Spain and Mexico has been relatively weak. As in the Spanish case, there are those who claim that Mexico's political culture was relatively unchanged by its transition to democracy (Durand Ponte, 2004: 20). Although the same arguments that contradict this notion in the Spanish case also apply for Mexico (i.e. ignoring the effects modernisation and institutional changes have on political culture), there is no denying that Mexico's civil society or social engagement with democratic politics is also far from exemplary. Mexico, for instance, only has around 8,500 legally registered NGOs whilst Chile has over 50,000 (Acosta, 2010: 278-279). As said before, a vibrant civil society is often considered a requisite for democratic consolidation as it is believed to be, by developing horizontal networks independent of the state, one of the main creators of 'a generalised trust among the citizenry' (i.e. social capital) that helps eradicate authoritarian tendencies and, thus, consolidate democracy (Encarnación, 2001: 54).

Spain's democratic consolidation, however, succeeded despite its 'notorious dearth of voluntary associations' (Hamann, 2003: 47). Although the positive association between civil society (and social capital) and democratisation has been questioned (Berman, 2009; Encarnación, 2001), it is the opinion of this author that civil society and social capital, without being the 'political panacea' some believe them to be (Encarnación, 2001: 56), more often than not help rather than hamper democratisation. This is not to say that democracy cannot be achieved without the positive influence of civil society – in fact it can be that, under certain conditions, too much social pressure can derail the democratisation process by increasing the likelihood of extremism and anti-democratic movements emerging (Berman, 2009; Hamann, 2003). But in the absence of the positive effects related to a strong civil society, there has to exist a different source of social capital (usually the democratic institutions themselves), a different source of a pro-democracy consensus at social level and a democratic 'guarantee' that deters authoritarian tendencies in the absence of an organised society capable of defending democracy. With this in

mind, I argue that the process of European integration was a relevant 'particularity' of the Spanish case that contributed towards partially solving some of the problems inherent in its 'pacted' transition. Whilst democratic disillusionment and lack of social mobilisation in Mexico, for instance, contributed towards a diminished consensus about the benefits of democracy, the incentive of European integration helped to maintain a pro-democracy consensus in Spain.

6.4. European actors, civil society and social democracy in Spain

There are many instances that support the notion that there were many 'positive exemplar effects of European capitalist democracies, deriving of a common collective "European Identity"' (Waisman, 2005:6), during Spain's democratisation. The previous chapters have already analysed some aspects of Europe's role as an 'example' and 'influence', as well as it being a set of incentives (Fishman, 2003: 40). Now the focus is on Europe's positive effect at social level during Spain's consolidation of democracy. As said before, it is during the consolidation stage that societal pressures and attitudes are more important. However, the behaviour of specific social actors during the transition stage can sometimes be equally relevant. The way the trade unions acted during the transition to democracy in Spain is a good example of such instance. The importance of labour organisation during Spain's transition was magnified by the fact that, although they were not necessarily as organised and efficient as their European counterparts, they were far more influential than other civil organisations and, most importantly, they were better organised than the Spanish employers' associations (Bermeo and García-Durán, 1994: 101). During the 1970s and early 1980s – especially after González came to power – relations between the PSOE and the main trade unions (the UGT and the CNT) soured due to high unemployment and tough economic conditions (McDonough *et al.*, 1998a: 20). Although a nationwide strike was eventually called in December 1988, there is no doubt that, despite their potential to destabilise the transition, the trade unions showed a high degree of moderation during the early years of the democratisation process – especially between 1979 and 1982 when the UCD's majority in government was weak, and social mobilisation could have created serious problems for the government (Hamann, 2003: 56). A major factor that explains this moderation is the positive reputation Europe had amongst the trade unions. The European Community in general, and some individual European governments in particular, had gained the respect of many trade union leaders (both socialists and communists) during the years of struggle against Franco; thus trade union leaders were receptive to the advice given by other European trade unions, that were encouraging them to hold back on their original instincts to reject the harsh economic measures and call for social mobilisations (*ibid*). More importantly though, the consensus on European integration was so wide that, much as the PSOE was forced to adjust its economic policy due to the constraints of European integration, the trade unions had

very little choice; the popular support was such that they could not be perceived as being the main factor derailing the process (*ibid*: 56-61). Thus, the process of European integration shaped the way labour-state relations were integrated into the new democratic system.

We could also argue that by following this internationalisation path, Spain's labour-state relations became more akin to those in other European industrial nations (where the influence and levels of participation in trade unions has been consistently declining). Once the PSOE was in government and democracy was considered to be relatively safe, the trade unions (mainly the UGT) felt comfortable enough in their position to break away from the party due to Felipe Gonzalez's economic policy. This break strengthened the independence of the unions from the PSOE, and thus transformed them into real actors of civil society, but it also led to a decrease in their influence. From around the same time as unions became independent, the 'Spanish workers fled the Unions almost as fast as they joined them' (Encarnación, 2001: 67).

On top of the explicit efforts by European actors to moderate the trade union's strategies, it seems that whatever pressure wielded by Europe was complemented by its mere presence as an incentive and example. Despite a clear absence of a strong civil society in Spain, 'the prospect of a better future as part of Europe may have absorbed much of the function with which civil society is credited – such as reinforcing the commitment to democracy' (Hamman, 2003: 62). 'The political culture of the transition was' according to Jonathan Story and Benny Pollack (1991: 134) 'peculiarly imbedded with a sense of linkage between domestic regime and external alignment'. They argue that Europe became synonymous with democracy; Europe, according to them, 'provided the unifying objective around which the internal consensus of the 1978 Constitution could be formed'. European integration, then, worked as an alternative to one of the functions commonly related to social capital, i.e. reinforcing a commitment to democracy. However, even if Spain's transition took place in the absence of a flourishing civil society (Hamman, 2003: 55) and even if Europe performed a key task often related to a strong civil society, this does not mean that social capital was not created, but rather that it was created in other ways.

As said before, institutionalist explanations of democratisation have long claimed that democratic political institutions often take over the creation of social capital where a weak civil society is unable to do so, thus producing 'the very same pro-democratic values and orientations believed to aid a flourishing civil society in a consolidating democracy' (Encarnación, 2001: 77). This often occurs because 'formal laws play an important role in shaping informal norms [... and] informal norms make the creation of certain kinds of political institution more or less likely' (Fukuyama, 2000: 111). The European Community, we could argue, provided (to an extent) certain formal 'laws' – in the shape of clear limitations as to what could and could not

be done without jeopardising Spain's membership in the EEC – which played a role in developing norms in Spain, which in turn made the emergence of democratic institutions more likely. In the absence of a strong civil society capable of creating the social capital credited with the consolidation of democracy, the consensus surrounding European integration worked as a democratic guarantee at social level. We should also not underestimate how important it was that a consensus was actually being reached at social level. After all, before the consolidation of democracy, Spanish political culture was characterised by an abundance of overlapping antagonisms (left vs. right, secular vs. religious, national vs. regional, etc.) (McDonough *et al.*, 1998a: 26). These antagonisms had led to the historic polarisation of Spanish society, and democracy can hardly be consolidated within highly polarised societies (unless special provisions for ethnic minorities are made) (*ibid.*: 25). The fact that there was a social consensus regarding European integration indicates the mere incentive of European integration played a part in the depolarisation of Spain's political culture. In any case, once the institutional transformations inherent in the process of European integration were completed, the institutions themselves contributed towards the creation of the sort of social capital needed for democratic consolidation (Crespo, 2007).

Finally, from the late 1970s, as part of the Community's push into the sociocultural arena, there has been a clear move towards homogenisation of social and cultural policies around the member states. The Maastricht Treaty's Social Chapter is clear evidence of this move. Its articles on welfare and labour indicated Brussels's desire to get involved legally and institutionally in European social engineering, and represent a clear indication of the EU's social dimension. However, the Maastricht treaty only formalised and reinforced the norms that already shaped the European social 'model'. This social model has long been characterised by a wide welfare state that, although it varies from country to country along the lines of Gosta Esping-Anderson's typology (1990) (from Britain's Anglo Saxon model to Scandinavia's socialist model), it normally covers social protection, income maintenance, health care, social services and unemployment protection. Even before Spain joined the EEC in 1982, there had been a clear trend towards the Europeanisation of its social model. However, after Franco's regime was dismantled the spending on social services as percentage of GDP consistently increased; social spending went from under 10 per cent of GDP in 1975 (Encarnación, 2008: 123) to over 21 per cent in 2005 (OECD Stats, 2013b). Although Spain's high unemployment rate partially explains increases in social spending, in 2005 Spain's unemployment (9.2 per cent of total workforce) was considerably lower than in 1985 (21 per cent), yet social spending as percentage of GDP was over 4 per cent higher (World Bank databank, 2013f). In short, despite the constraints on public spending imposed by a tough economic situation and the need to comply with European directives in order to join the EMU, what had been a very traditional welfare system – as in the rest of Southern Europe and the developing world based primarily on

family ties (Bermeo, 2000: 274) and not on government intervention – was fundamentally transformed. As in other areas of economic reform (such as the privatisation programme followed after the transition), the need to develop a comprehensive welfare state followed the logic of European integration and the structural limitations this implied, rather than a direct conditioning to do so by the EEC; the dynamics of integration set the agenda for political change whilst the different governments decided how to achieve it (Chari and Heywood, 2008: 201). The quick expansion of Spain's welfare state is partially explained by one direct and one indirect factor related to European integration. In the first instance, the expansion of social spending is directly explained by the post-transition objective of 'catching up' with Europe in economic (Encarnación, 2008: 123; Yaniz Igal and De Lecea, 2007: 349) as well as social (Guillén and Alvarez, 2004: 26) terms, whilst there was also a desire – particularly amongst the PSOE leadership – to protect those who would suffer the most from the rest of the structural reforms necessary to modernise the state and to join the EEC (Bermeo and Gracia-Durán, 1994: 113-115).

The more radical changes in the Spanish social model took place 'from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s' and were especially evident in the enhancement of social citizenship in the fields of 'health care, non-contributory benefits, social services for dependent people, and labour insertion policies' (Guillén and Alvarez, 2004: 24). The radical transformation of the social structures of the state in this period is largely explained by the PSOE's ability to implement policies due to its close links with organised labour – the UCD government was never able to garner such support (Bermeo and Gracia-Durán, 1994: 101) – rather than by a radical change of ideology from the UCD to the PSOE. Whatever the reasons in the 'delay' in implementing social reform, this adjustment has brought the Spanish social model closer to the European standard in terms of the amount of money spent in social policy and the way this money is spent. Europe has had a direct impact on this process by setting European directives (found in the SEA and the Social Charter) and by providing European funds that are directed at supporting specific social programmes that may not necessarily be national priorities, such as the infrastructure related to the welfare state (job centres, vocational training schools and related expenditure). Spain's internationalisation, then, not only influenced how Spain achieved its transition to democracy but also the type of democracy it was moving towards.

Europe's 'soft touch', then, has been an influential social factor during Spain's reformulation of its welfare state. For the Spanish population 'becoming European has meant, among other aspects, "attaining European levels of social protection"' (Guillén and Alvarez, 2004: 26); hence, since the very beginning, one of the main goals of Spain's project of internationalisation was to achieve a social transformation. It was also clear from the outset that in order to achieve this goal, Spain had to take on the European discourse, and the policies that came with it,

regarding gender equality, justice, the fight against poverty and social security. Although it would seem some of these aspects are inherent elements of democratisation, we should not immediately assume this; there is a huge difference between what democracy is, what the prerequisites for its emergence are, what it generates and what it contributes towards (Carbone, 2009: 124-126). There is no guarantee that democracy will lead to inclusive politics or redistribution; democratic politics may indeed produce a distinction between winners and losers, and it is not necessarily the majority who will always end up being the winners (*ibid*: 129). Spain's transition to a social democracy was the consequence of more than its transition process alone; Europe as an example and as a project played a role in shaping the social dimension of Spanish democracy. What is more, even if the ideological dimension had not been not there, access to European funds available to apply certain social policies is enough of an incentive to apply them. This is yet another example of European policy, ethos and practices having a direct effect on the constitution of Spanish society and state. Europe has, by virtue of influencing the Spanish welfare state, influenced the composition of Spanish political culture. Spaniards are now becoming less focused on their survival/material values (since they have been taken care of by the welfare state) and are now just as focused on self-expression values (equality, personal freedom, tolerance and the such) as the rest of Western Europe.

In short, European integration explicitly includes an economic/political dimension as well as a sociocultural one. It is its dual commitment to market and social development that makes the European project unique. This model, 'described as a "social market economy", [which] combines a market system with internal solidarity and mutual support' (Pastor, 2002: 37-38), has influenced the Spanish transition to democracy in far more fundamental ways that NAFTA did in Mexico. It also greatly 'shaped' the Spanish democracy in what can only be described as the European social mould of democracy. It is now necessary to compare this wide-ranging experience of internationalisation – that includes a strong sociocultural dimension and a multilevel influence on democratisation – with the absolute omission of any sort of policies, strategies or even dialogue addressing these issues in the North American process.

6.5. Internationalisation, society and democracy in Mexico

What internationalisation meant for Mexico's transition to democracy is far from straightforward. As was said in the very first chapter, there is still 'a widely shared sense' that in countries like Mexico there is 'an important, if not easily explicated, relationship between pre-existing cultural norms and the legacies of authoritarian rule' and the prospects for democracy (Middlebrook, 2004: 28), yet it is not clear if Mexico's internationalisation has, in any way, transformed these cultural norms. Some claim that Mexico's process of internationalisation has had a degree of influence in shaping Mexico's push for democracy from above as well as from

below. Daniel Levy and Kathlin Bruhn's assessment that 'political change in Mexico has become inextricably intertwined with internationalisation' (2006: 4) considers these two dimensions. In their view NAFTA played some part in Mexico's cultural democratic development, much as it did in limiting some of the choices available to the elites. Despite the many marked differences with their North American neighbours, Mexicans, they argue, are becoming more and more democratic as a result of internationalisation, and their political culture resembles more and more that of the citizens in the United States and Canada (*ibid*: 128). How it is that this homogenisation of political culture is taking place, however, is not explained in much detail. Their broad explanation that NAFTA, by reducing the capacity of the states to deal with problems in a vertical manner, contributed towards the emergence of civil society groups that occupy these spaces is not entirely convincing.

Kevin Middlebrook, unlike Levy and Bruhn, is more cautious in his analysis of NAFTA's effects on Mexico's society and democracy. Besides showing concerns about the democratic nature of Mexican political culture, he claims that the United States has not done much to support democratic development in Mexico, or indeed that NAFTA has not done much to ease the pressure of social inequality. He shares Levy and Bruhn's view that economic liberalisation did play a role in Mexico's economic development whilst undermining the links between the PRI and the peasantry (its usual electoral stronghold), but he also finds that the new economic model 'undermined social structures and organisational networks that had sustained pro-democracy mobilisations in earlier periods' (Middlebrook, 2004: 7). He uses the example of Spain to put forward the view that although in many cases economic integration with well-institutionalised democracies can contribute to democratisation, this was not entirely the case with Mexico. This has to do with an entrenched Mexican nationalism that tends to reject any sort of American influence, but also with the fact that 'most U.S. government agencies and nongovernmental actors did not adopt a pro-democracy agenda in their relations with Mexico until the mid 1990's' (Middlebrook, 2004: 22) by which time NAFTA had already been signed and approved by a non-democratic government. Although he does acknowledge that closer economic ties and an ever-growing cross-national civil society (mainly emigrants' networks and environmental NGOs) 'may over time contribute significantly to greater political pluralism and societal democratisation in Mexico' (*ibid*: 47), his overall analysis of NAFTA's impact is rather negative.

In many ways, I agree with Middlebrook's argument that just because NAFTA – by securing a move towards a neoliberal model – contributed toward the shrinking of the central (authoritarian) state, it does not mean it helped the development of a strong civic society or a consensus for democracy. The fact is that not all social groups are inherently good for democracy or creators of social capital. In the case of Mexico, for instance, the authoritarian

past has left long-lasting legacies at social level that influence the behaviour of civil society. We must remember that although the PRI was a semi-corporatist state that controlled a wide clientelist network, it still had to work with the limited resources available to a developing economy. At the same time, the arrangement between the PRI and the rent-seeking coalitions in Mexico was done in a non-institutionalised manner – since doing it in any other way would have implied the PRI surrendering control to external forces – which furthered crippled the ability of the regime to directly ‘bribe’ the masses. The PRI’s cosy arrangement with the rent-seeking coalitions, which was, to an extent a characteristic inherited from the Porfiriato³, further limited the resources available to the regime. By offering incentives to the wealth-holders (in the form of access to information, protection from competition and a favourable tax regime) the PRI sacrificed income for the sake of avoiding competition. The PRI, unlike the oil-rich regimes in the Arabian Peninsula for instance, simply could not afford to buy off everyone (through free education, little to no taxation, comprehensive welfare, healthcare or straightforward bribes). This meant that the citizenry quickly adapted to this reality; like in many other authoritarian regimes, political culture under the PRI in Mexico was exclusively a function of the political regime (Durand Ponte, 2004: 27). The average citizen in Mexico was always well aware ‘of the kinds of political action’ that were ‘likely to be rewarded by the authorities’ and thus tried to ‘influence the government decision-making process’ at the stage of policy implementation rather than during the input stage of the process (Craig and Cornelius, 1980: 332). The dawn of an electoral democracy in Mexico has not yet transformed this social dynamic. As the mobilisation following the contested 2006 electoral results arguably show, in Mexico the making of a point that people seem to believe is democratic, justifies employing antidemocratic strategies (Castañeda and Morales, 2008: 254); more often than not politically organised groups are less apt at changing things than they are at simply blocking the making of decisions (Silva-Herzog Márquez, 2010: 199). In essence, the fact that NAFTA contributed towards the retrenchment of the state away from spaces that should be occupied by civil society and other social groups did not guarantee that these spaces were occupied by the sort of civil society groups that lead to creation of social capital.

³ Some new interpretations claim that the Porfiriato’s success was based on more than simply delivering order; much of the economic success during this time was based, so the argument goes, on a specific policy of favouring national industrial entrepreneurs over foreigners (Lewis, 2004: 353) and by developing a stable market economy for public debt where investment banks could operate (Marichal, 1997: 127). Yet, it seems likely that the objective of such policies was ‘to create opportunities for mutual self-enrichment’ by the Porfirian elites (Lewis, 2004: 353). What is more, although the regime helped to establish a banking sector by introducing institutional reforms, the authoritarian nature of the regime also ended up hindering its development and that of other industries. There were severe restrictions on the banks’ founding and operations ‘in order to protect the interests of an in-group of financial elites’. This hindrance on the banking sector combined with the highly politicised nature of the regime ‘meant that individuals were reluctant to invest in enterprises in which they lacked direct knowledge or control’ (Haber, 1997: 171). A similar situation emerged during the dominance of the PRI and they, much as the Porfirian technocrats did long before, decided to incentivise investment by limiting competition and taxation, thus developing a system of opportunities for elite self-enrichment. Although this worked fine for the elites, it left the regime with a limited capacity to raise revenue from taxation.

This is not to say that the 1990s were not a period characterised by a level of civil society engagement never experienced before in the country (Acosta, 2010: 268). As said earlier in this chapter, to say that Mexico achieved a transition to an electoral democracy without transforming, at least partly, the political culture of the country seems unlikely. In the case of Mexico, much as happened in Spain, the transition to a democratic system was the consequence of pressure being put on the regime's structure from different angles. Although at the highest level the 'loyal' opposition (i.e. the PAN) remained the main political force challenging the regime from within, suddenly other forms of opposition emerged: there was a clandestine and/or violent opposition (e.g. the Zapatista movement in Chiapas), a social opposition, and an opposition from within the regime (e.g. Cárdenas and Muñoz Ledo's *Corriente Democrática*) (*ibid*: 149).

The emergence of a wide-ranging – even if not necessarily powerful – opposition movement suggests that there was more to the pressure to democratise than elite-level calculations. During the 1990s, as the neoliberal reforms transformed the state structures, there was an opportunity for new social groups to emerge. The context of NAFTA, which increased the sensitivity of the regime to international criticism, greatly explains why the many NGOs that emerged following the 1977 political reform (which made it easier for opposition parties and organisations to gain official status) were considerably strengthened during the 1990s (Selee and Peschard, 2010: 13). Ever since the mid 1980s, as De la Madrid's administration stopped trying to mediate in the Central American conflicts, the attention of the Human Rights organisations that emerged in the 1970s (such as *Adademia Mexicana de Derechos Humanos*) shifted towards domestic affairs (Durand Ponte, 1994: 300-301). This led to some respected international Human Rights organisations (mainly Amnesty International) to also start focusing more on the Mexican case (*ibid*). A few years later, as NAFTA was being debated in the early 1990s, many social and ecological concerns emerged, which triggered an even bigger wave of attention; many sectors of society in the United States who had been disengaged with the Mexican situation started to take notice of developments south of the border. What is more, the Salinas administration also tried to use the Mexican 'diaspora' in the United States as a tool to improve its image there, which was still somehow tarnished by the perceived electoral fraud of 1988, and garnish support in favour of NAFTA. A part of this strategy was to try and get Mexican civil organisations in the United States involved in (mainly localised) projects in Mexico (Ayón, 2010: 233-236). All of a sudden people in the United States, Canada and beyond started to show concerns about the effects NAFTA (as an expression of globalisation) would have on the poor and the environment, but also about the PRI's record in Human Rights abuses. Some NGOs in Mexico saw the opportunity to forge alliances with likeminded organisations in the United States, which allowed them to gain an international audience and financial resources (Acosta, 2010: 273). The

Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas also helped Mexican NGOs to remain in the limelight. However, after the transition to democracy was achieved in 2000, the boom of NGO activity – which, as said before, was compared to other Latin American countries still rather weak (*ibid*: 278-279) – came to an end as Mexico stopped being in the consciousness of the international community (*ibid*: 275-277). Whatever it was that civil society achieved during the 1990s it failed to replicate after the transition, which is actually when it is most important for civil society to develop social capital.

In short, both the Mexican and Spanish transitions to democracy happened despite the lack of the sort of civil society organisations that are commonly associated with creating the social capital necessary for democratic consolidation. The difference is that in the case of Spain the process of European integration offered, in the first instance, such a powerful incentive at social and elite level that it very much guaranteed the success of the transition, whilst the many institutional adaptations implied in the Europeanisation of Spain also functioned, after the transition, as an alternative source of social capital (Closa, 2001; Encaración, 2001; Hamman, 2004; Linz and Stepan, 1996: 113). In the case of Mexico, although there were important social mobilisations and an increasing number of civil organisations (see for example Durand Ponte (1994: 306) for a detailed list of Human Rights organisations in Mexico) which, as in the Spanish case, put pressure on the regime to democratise (Ortega Ortiz, 2008: 37), the fact remains that civil society was still fairly underdeveloped. Even the widespread 1988 mobilisation led by Cárdenas cannot be considered as a consequence of a change in political culture or in the society's capacity to organise itself. In many ways the movement was a reflection of the traditional political culture of 'following the leader' (in this case the son of the mythical nationalist president the 'Tata' Lázaro Cárdenas) (Durand Ponte, 2004: 79). The fact that the *Corriente Democrática* failed to capitalise on this momentum is partly explained (as well as the pacts reached by the PRI and the PAN, and the political violence aimed at its activists) by a lack of social engagement.

There may be no guarantees that had the United States taken a more proactive stance towards developing civil society in Mexico the outcome would have been different. In fact, recent studies have questioned the wisdom of outside funding of civil society organisations, as this can lead to polarisation and violence rather than democratisation (Berman, 2009: 55). Having said this, until fairly recently supporting civil society (as well as supporting decentralisation and strengthening the judiciary) was the preferred strategy for democracy promotion amongst democratic centres (Carothers, 2002: 14-16). The United States in particular – having tried in the past military intervention, covert action, diplomatic and economic sanctions in their attempts to 'advance democracy' – settled since the 1980s for 'a new tool' of 'democracy assistance' in the shape of 'financial support and training for prodemocratic groups abroad' (Pangle, 2009: 5).

Considering that the fall of the Berlin Wall was followed by a drastic increase in democracy promotion activities (*ibid*: 6-7), we would have to conclude that the fact that the United States did not get more involved in supporting civil society in Mexico had more to do with its overall lack of involvement in the country rather than with a particular strategy.

In truth though, as Mariclaire Acosta (2010: 274) – a prominent civil activist and Head of Freedom House Mexico – acknowledges, by the 1990s the regime was so ‘discredited and fragile that it did not take much to make it yield’; civil society was stronger than before but by no means was it ‘setting the beat for the transition’. In Mexico, then, there was no external factor similar to the EEC that could provide an alternative source of democratic consensus or social capital. If anything, we must not forget, NAFTA was an exercise of non-democratic policy-making – no one could claim with a straight face that Salinas’ government was a democratic one. We also have to consider two more factors. First of all, as mentioned before, the nationalist sentiment among Mexicans, which has historically been based ‘upon popular resistance to an even greater US presence in domestic affairs’, further constrained any sort of ‘potential political effects flowing from geographic continuity with the [United States] and North America’ (Middlebrook, 2004: 22) during the transition years. On top of that, we have to consider that by the time most nongovernmental actors in the United States started to adopt a pro-democracy agenda in Mexico (i.e. the mid 1990s) NAFTA had already been signed and approved (*ibid*). In a similar vein, Mexico’s democratic consolidation should have taken place in the earlier part of last decade (2000s) when the momentum of the transition, coupled with a strong civil society, would have made it possible to enact the deep institutional reforms that were needed (Aristegui, 2010). In short, by the time civil society was being mobilised on both sides of the border the moment of heightened sensitivity to leverage, when social pressure in the United States could have made a real difference, had already passed, and the time when a strong civil society was needed to help consolidate democracy was yet to arrive. Civil society was unable to sustain its level of effervescence and the momentum was lost (*ibid*).

6.6. Conclusion

The lack of an external dimension to the creation of social capital is not entirely to blame, of course, for the lacklustre performance of Mexican democracy, but it was certainly another missed opportunity to strengthen it. The lack of a strong civil society or even a wider-ranging democratic consensus has led to Mexican democracy being ‘hijacked’ by the electoral-political realm. As with the Spanish case, the mass values, attitudes and ideology of Mexican society have been greatly shaped by the experience of over 70 years of authoritarianism (Durand Ponte, 2004: 33), and changing this political culture will take longer than it took to transform the institutional design (*ibid*: 31; Crespo, 2007: 11). In the Spanish case, the European institutional

framework and the legitimacy that European membership gave to the democratic regime – especially during González's first term – meant that democracy could thrive in Spain despite a democratic culture not being entirely consolidated. Similarly, during the early stages of the transition, the broad consensus surrounding European membership and the widespread belief that democratisation was a condition for accession, effectively functioned as a guarantee that the social consensus in favour of democracy would not be broken. This consensus in favour of democracy is usually protected by social capital and a strong civil society. In the Mexican case, the first government after the alternation in power – which is key in shaping the new political culture of society (Crespo, 2007: 37) – had to rely on its own democratic performance to 'convince' Mexican society that democracy could deliver on its promises. The lack of comprehensive institutional reforms in Mexico, then, has led to the creation of a 'vicious' rather than 'virtuous' cycle between democratic political institutions and democratic political culture (Durand Ponte, 2004: 273). NAFTA, unlike the EU, offered little in terms of supporting democracy at social level, supporting the emergence of civil society, contributing towards the transformation of an institutional design that helps shape a democratic political culture, or indeed simply being a wide-ranging incentive to support democracy.

VII. Conclusions and Epilogue

The thesis' main goal has been to present a detailed analysis of the way in which Mexico and Spain's experiences with internationalisation shaped – to varying degrees and in particular ways – their transitions to democracy. In a similar vein, the main motivation to carry out this comparison has been to contribute towards the field of democratisation studies as much as to the fields to Spanish and Mexican studies. With this in mind, I believe it is important to, first and foremost, develop some overall conclusions of the broad analysis presented in this work, as well as to frame within the current international context some of the lessons that can be learned from the Mexican and Spanish experiences. To an extent, lessons from the Spanish transition to democracy have already been learned; during the eastern enlargement, for instance, the European Commission took a much firmer approach to the now explicit (in the Copenhagen Criteria) democratic conditionality and introduced specific instruments to strengthen it (Pridham, 2007: 237). Yet, there are also some important lessons that can also be learned from the Mexican experience. Probably the most important of them is that a high linkage to a democratic centre has to be complemented by at least some degree of leverage. As we saw in the fifth chapter, the Spanish case elucidates how the EEC/EU has not been afraid of using strong conditionality (even though it was not entirely explicit then) as the stick, and the prospect of membership as the carrot (Dimitrova and Pridham, 2004: 99). The United States in the case of Mexico, on the other hand, refused to use the stick or to condition the carrot on any sort of democratic commitment. Even in the few instances when some sectors of society in the United States showed some concerns about the political situation in Mexico (such as during the political crisis of the mid 1990s), the United States government categorically refused to condition the signing of NAFTA on political developments. In short, as has been said repeatedly throughout this thesis, NAFTA represents, above all, a missed opportunity.

7.1. Main conclusions

Many instances that back the argument that NAFTA has been a missed opportunity have been presented throughout this thesis. Similarly, although not without its tribulations and ambiguities, there is enough evidence to suggest that the role the process of European integration played in the consolidation of democracy in Spain was far more positive than the one NAFTA played in Mexico. To reach this overall conclusion, this thesis followed a typical small-n research design. As was discussed in the first chapter, due to the nature of the research, the population size (N) from where to gather our sample (n) was always limited; there are, after all, only a limited number of cases outside Europe of countries that have embarked on a democratisation process whilst (almost) simultaneously attempting some degree of regional integration with highly democratic countries. There are certainly some IOs that have applied some degree of democratic

conditionality (NATO, the Council of Europe, OAE, MERCOSUR and even some international financial institutions), but there is little doubt that the 'integrative institutions in the European context exceed by far the influence any international organisation has on institutional change in sovereign states in other parts of the world' (Dimitrova and Pridham, 2004: 94). Certainly NAFTA's weak institutional arrangement is far from the European model, but it could also be said that what NAFTA meant for Mexico was very similar to what the process of European integration meant for Spain: a key element in their respective attempts to redefine their political systems. Again, there may be other cases where democratising countries join IOs in an attempt to legitimise their democratic credentials (Pevehouse, 2002), but there are no other cases outside of Europe of democratising countries attempting economic or political integration with consolidate and well-functioning democratic centres.

The first chapter also conveyed the importance of focused comparisons when dealing with mechanism-based explanations of democratisation. Although large-n statistical studies are of paramount importance when testing specific causal correlations, the analysis of case studies remains, in my view, the best way to analyse the complex interactions between internationalisation processes and transitions to democracy. Let us not forget that, as was discussed at length in the earlier stages of this work, the exercise of defining, categorising and qualifying democracy remains, after more than fifty years of study, highly problematic. Whilst the procedural/Schumpeterian definitions of democracy have been criticised – and often with very good reason – I argued in the second chapter that these type of straightforward definitions do allow researchers to efficiently develop the kind of simple 'either/or' classifications that then allow us to embark on the sort of 'more or less' comparisons (Kalleberg, 1966: 81) such as this project. With this in mind, then, after offering a wide-ranging (without being exhaustive) literature review, a definition of democracy based on Shumpeter's minimalist definition but complemented by Bobbio's legal dimension, Sartori's liberal elements, and Inglehart and Wlezel's genuine democracy concept (the mass-values/social dimension) was developed. There is no denying that this attempt at developing a definition of democracy that fitted my research had to overlook – due to temporal and methodological constraints – some other interesting aspects of the debate such as what democracy is and what it is not (see for example Schmitter and Karl (1991)) or the questions that still exists regarding the wisdom of attaching qualifiers to democracy in order to define a wide range of regimes (Merkel, 1998). However, the objective was to develop a definition based on Schumpeterian/procedural interpretations rather than a new minimalist definition. The definition put forward in the second chapter is 'minimalist' in the sense that it focuses on the procedural (formal institutions) elements of democracy rather than on its ideological or theoretical interpretation. Certainly there are some problems with such an understating of democracy – as acknowledge throughout the thesis – yet there is no denying that such an understanding facilitates comparison. At the same time, even if we were to consider a

broader range of characteristics to define the quality of a democracy (e.g. good governance, security, redistribution and welfare, peace, etcetera), there is little doubt that, despite its many problems, Spanish democracy is of a higher quality than Mexico's democracy.

Similarly, although hybrid regimes were analysed, and a clear explanation of why Spain's democratisation should be considered as a greater success than Mexico's was put forward, it is clear that it would have been almost impossible to cover the wide range of literature that deals with the concept of democracy and the singularities of democratisation. Similarly, the definition of internationalisation presented in the second chapter had to ignore – although not in its totality – some key aspects of the debate surrounding the impact globalisation can have in the exercise of democracy (Held, 1995 and 1997; Saward, 2008). Yet, it was necessary to present a focused definition of internationalisation as a conscious process that is characterised by the increase in the salience of the international (be it the context in general or specific actors) in domestic politics.

More importantly, however, the second chapter really set the beat for the rest of the comparison. The brief description and categorisation of democratisation theories based on the issue of causality shaped the rest of the thesis' structure. This division of democratisation theories into three/four general approaches or schools – political culture, modernisation and elite theory/institutionalism – was to be mirrored throughout the thesis. In very broad terms, the fourth chapter analysed the correlation between internationalisation and democratisation from a perspective of modernisation theory, the fifth did the same from a perspective of elite theory, whilst the previous chapter looked at 'the other side of the coin' by analysing the influence of international actors and context in prompting democratic pressures from below.

The third chapter, although already engaging fully with the analysis of the case studies, presented some initial general considerations. First of all, this chapter, building on the theoretical justification for carrying out a comparison between Mexico's and Spain's transitions to democracy, presented a far more detailed comparison of the peculiarities of NAFTA and the EEC/EU. Besides presenting an overall chronological/historical description that further elucidated why this particular comparison was justified, the first part of this chapter touched on a very important singularity of NAFTA; its dual-bilateral nature. Despite being a trilateral agreement, this chapter explained how, in reality, NAFTA works more as a 'dual-bilateral' agreement between Mexico and the United States, and between the United States and Canada; the 'third leg of the triangle' is considerably weaker. In essence, although trade between Mexico and Canada did increase after NAFTA, the relationship between the two has remained weak. If anything, it seems that NAFTA rather than spurring cooperation between the two countries in order to 'correct' the inherently asymmetrical nature of North American integration – much as

the smaller countries in the EU sometimes do – has led to even more reliance on the United States as both Mexico and Canada are unwilling to risk angering the colossus by giving the impression they are plotting against it. Besides the more obvious implications of this asymmetrical relationship (an overreliance on the United States economy has led to an almost chronic inability of the Mexican economy to diversify), the lack of any significant increase in the linkage between Mexico and Canada basically means that only United States based actors (at least official actors) are able to provide the sort of pro-democracy international support/assistance that Spain received from a number of sources (the EEC, the Commission, individual European Governments, the Council of Europe, etcetera), and only the United States had any significant leverage potential during Mexico's transition. Given that, as said in the previous chapter, the United States is neither the biggest advocate of democracy promotion, or has it been particularly concerned with supporting democracy in Mexico (at least not financially), Mexico's democratic struggle has not benefited, despite the opportunities economic integration with North America produced, from the positive effects democracy promotion strategies can arguably produce.

Despite the very narrow (some may say short-sighted) remit of NAFTA, the lack of a clear commitment by United States based actors and United States administrations to support democracy in Mexico, and despite the almost complete indifference Canada has shown towards Mexican affairs since the signing of NAFTA, Mexico's internationalisation still shaped, to an extent, its democratisation process. If nothing else, Mexico's radical change in its stance towards the outside world – evident in its attempts to formalise its links of economic interdependence with the United States – opened the door for a wide range of political, social and even institutional transformations. The experience with decentralisation that followed Mexico's process of internationalisation is a very good example of how the context of NAFTA – albeit not the treaty itself of course – contributed towards the emergence of the sort of 'critical junctures' that, according to Acemoglu and Robinson (2012), only appear sporadically and are key in achieving institutional transformations. Albeit somehow marginally, NAFTA contributed to the Mexican decentralisation process by, sometimes in a more direct way than others, opening opportunities to certain municipalities and state governments to gain access to resources outside the federal (i.e. the PRI's) control. The two narrow 'development' institutions that emerged from NAFTA – the NADB and BECC – allowed a small number of localities to access some resources outside the PRI's direct control. Although these and other resources – such as remittances set by the Diaspora to their communities of origin to support very localised development projects – were rather limited, they were still significant as it was the first time municipal governments had control of some resources and could, in some instances, challenge the wishes of the central government.

European membership played a similarly indirect part in the decentralisation of power in Spain, as it opened opportunities for regional governments to access European funds. However, its role during the consolidation of the Spanish State of the Autonomies was probably far more significant. It has been argued that in the new Spanish democracy European politics have worked as a source of cooperation on what is a system usually characterised by bargaining and confrontation. In a nutshell, the transfer of competencies to the European level has transformed the distribution of resources between the central government in Madrid and the Autonomous Communities leading to a mutual dependence between the two (Börzel, 2000). The regions depend on Madrid to access European-level decision making, whilst Madrid depends on the regions to implement European policies. This mutual dependence is accentuated by the fact that the European Commission – after a ruling from the European Court of Justice (ECJ) – has the capacity to implement hefty fines if a member state fails to ‘fulfil’ an obligation; the lack of ‘fulfilment’, however, can emerge from a failure to legislate accordingly (a remit of the central government) or as a result of facts, i.e. a failure to enforce the law (often a remit of the regional governments). Thus, if the central government is to avoid action from the Commission and the ECJ it needs to work together with the Autonomous Communities in order to implement the European directives. This peculiar European dynamic may help explain why Tanja Börzel (*ibid*: 18) goes as far as to claim that it was ‘Europeanisation rather than the consolidation of the State of the Autonomies [that] has driven the shift [away from competitive regionalism and] towards cooperative federalism’. In short, whilst it could be said that the EU contributed towards the normalisation of Spain’s institutionally uneven decentralisation process, NAFTA contributed only towards the uneven decentralisation and not towards the normalisation of relations.

Decentralisation/federalism is but one characteristic that political regimes and, although it can of course partly define the quality of a democracy, it is not in itself a requisite of democratic regimes. I have no doubt that both Spanish and Mexican democracies would benefit from a strong institutional federalist model, but this characteristic is not what makes them democratic. In short, the influence of the dynamics of regional integration and the decentralisation process only indirectly plays a part in shaping democratic regimes. On the other hand, socioeconomic development, as argued by modernisation scholars for over fifty years, supposedly can cause the right conditions for democracy to emerge and to survive. As we saw in the fourth chapter, there is not just one version of modernisation, but rather a plethora of theories that are linked together by the premise that, to varying degrees, there is a direct positive correlation (not necessarily causal however) between socioeconomic development and democracy. Although modernisation theory may sometimes fail to explain – or predict – democratisation (we briefly explored these issues in a Latin American setting), there is an argument to be made that, as said in the fourth chapter, any analysis of democratisation has to at least ‘come to terms with the central findings of the cross-national statistical research’ and acknowledge that there is some degree of

'association between economic development and democracy' (Huber *et al.*, 1993: 72). With this premise in mind, this thesis presented an analysis of the ways in which NAFTA and the EEC (the prospect of membership included) may have influenced socioeconomic development in both countries. Although the evidence is far from conclusive, it would be fair to say that, if we take the stricter view of modernisation theory, Spanish accession into Europe was far more positive for its economic development than Mexico's attempts to integrate economically with North America.

Although some of NAFTA's strongest backers allude to some of the impressive figures regarding the increase of trade between the three parties and the huge increase in FDI that flowed into Mexico, there is little doubt that the sheer amount of aid Spain received before and after accession to the EEC overshadows whatever positive impact NAFTA may have had on the Mexican economy. Having said this though, both countries underwent some relevant structural transactions as a consequence (or in preparation of) their processes of internationalisation. NAFTA meant the end of Mexico's isolationism and it basically secured Mexico's economic strategy for the foreseeable future. What is more, the signing of NAFTA was supposed to be the masterstroke of the Salinas administration. The signing of the treaty (and the whole neoliberal project) meant that the PRI rendered control of the economy, and that, as the size of the state was being considerably reduced, the PRI would be unable to use its old clientelist networks to secure its political future. Yet, all these costs to the PRI regime were supposed to be offset by the huge economic boost NAFTA would cause; Mexico would join the club of developed nations and the PRI would gain huge amounts of political capital for making this happen. The regime truly bet its political future on economic integration (Levitsky and Way, 2010: 155). The plan, so it seems, was to use a combination of fear and political capital to convince the electorate that only the PRI could deliver the goods. Everything changed, however, when the economic crisis of 1995 all but destroyed the trust of the electorate on the capacity of the PRI to manage the economy. In many ways, NAFTA's greatest success as a democratic agent was its failure on delivering its rather extravagant promises. This certainly contributed towards the electoral collapse of the PRI – a short-lived one as it turned out – thus opening opportunities to opposition forces, but it certainly did not do much to contribute to the establishment of a democratic regime. As said before, the Mexican case elucidates, at best, how economic considerations can help us explain the breakdown of an authoritarian regimes, but not necessarily (at least in the Mexican case) of how democracy emerges.

An equally important factor this thesis analysed was the very distinct linkage and leverage dynamics in North America during the early stages of Mexico's transition. As was said in the fifth chapter, the sensitivity to foreign leverage amongst the Mexican elites during the negotiating stages of NAFTA was like nothing that has happened before or since. There are of

course no guarantees (political science rarely is about absolutes) that had the United States taken a stronger stance and decided to apply some of its leverage potential (i.e. condition NAFTA to political developments in Mexico), the Mexican democratisation process would have been a categorical success. As the very Spanish process of democratisation elucidates, 'pacted' transitions (or democratisation from 'above') are far from being the silver bullet solution to the problem of democratic consolidation. Yet, the part Europe played as a democratic 'incentive' at elite level can hardly be described as anything other than beneficial. If nothing else, the strict use of leverage by the EEC (categorically conditioning accession to widespread democratic reforms), combined with the widespread belief amongst virtually all sectors of Spanish society that Europe was 'the solution to the problem of Spain', filled the elites at the helm of the transition with a certain degree of urgency. All political factions agreed that joining Europe was necessary to secure Spain's future development; thus the EEC's strict democratic conditionality provided an extra incentive for the political elites to democratise and to do so as quickly as possible. This consensus was lacking in the Mexican case and this certainly helps to explain why the transition to democracy in Mexico has been the sort of 'war of attrition' that characterises protracted transitions (Esiendstadt, 2000: 4), and which explains its relative lack of success.

What is more, despite Levitsy and Way's (2010: 153-161) insistence that the 'powerful indirect pressures for reform' that linkage to the United States generated were enough to force the PRI regime to initiate democracy from above 'at a time when opposition forces were still relatively weak', there is enough evidence to suggest this process was not entirely as straightforward. Although I completely agree with the argument that to understand Mexico's transition we have to understand 'the interplay between domestic and international factors' (*ibid*: 161), we should not ignore the many shortcomings of NAFTA, particularly if compared to the Spanish case. There is no doubt that, as has been said repeatedly throughout this thesis, 'Mexico's position regarding the role of international actors' shifted as a result of NAFTA-fuelled pressure from the United States (Dresser, 1996: 324). Almost overnight, Mexico's sensitivity to leverage from the United States was drastically increased, whilst in the eyes of the United States Mexico stopped being 'an exotic anomaly' and became 'a part of the North American community' (*ibid*). The stage was set for the United States (and Canada) to play a greater part in supporting Mexico's democracy. Why Canada refrained from getting involved in promoting democracy in Mexico is more or less clear, but the reasons behind the United States almost paranoid refusal to even suggest some sort of political conditionality on NAFTA remain something of a mystery. Cold War mentality explains to a certain degree why the United States tolerated (and sometimes openly supported) authoritarian regimes in the Western Hemisphere, but there seems to be no explanation as to why the United States changed its stance towards the rest of the region except Mexico. It seems that in the case of Mexico, as Jacqueline Mazza (2001) persuasively argues,

the United States has historically placed far more importance on stability than on democracy. The principle of a 'policy of no policy' has very much (mis)guided American foreign policy towards Mexico since the times of the Porfiriato, and has arguably led to a belief amongst policy-makers in the United States that the best way to deal with Mexico is to not deal with it at all.

There is little doubt that Mexican nationalism was to an extent built on the foundations of mistrust of the northern hegemon, and that social views towards the United States have never been particularly positive. Regardless, NAFTA presented a unique opportunity to the United States to support democratic development in Mexico. Despite the real opposition to NAFTA that the PRD represented, there is evidence to suggest that the majority of the population regarded free trade and FDI in a positive light since the mid 1980s (Domínguez and McCann, 1996: 69). Considering what appears to have been a more or less widespread view in favour of NAFTA (for obvious reasons there was no official consultation on the matter) and that the PRI was counting on its success to survive, it would be fair to assume that had the United States decided to apply some of its leverage potential it would have been very hard for the Mexican political elites to ignore it.

NAFTA represented, yet again, a missed opportunity. Although arguably a 'success' in the very narrow goals it officially set for itself, there is no doubt that the prevailing impression is that the treaty simply failed to deliver on its potential. NAFTA's contributions to Mexico's democratisation are unimpressive. The sixth chapter further elucidated this point by presenting an analysis of how despite the context of NAFTA drastically increasing the opportunities to develop linkages at civil society level, this never truly materialised. Despite the overwhelming flow of citizens from one side of the border to the other (not only from Mexico to the United States but also the other way around), and claims that Mexicans, Americans and Canadians are becoming increasingly similar in their values and attitudes (Inglehart *et al.*, 1996; Levy and Bruhn, 2006: 128), there seems to be no clear democratic culture emerging in Mexico. This of course has very little to do with NAFTA and has more to do with an authoritarian past that has shaped societal attitudes in a specific way. Yet internationalisation processes can also help transform societal attitudes – or at least minimise their impact on the democratic regime.

Spain is a typical example of democracy being consolidated despite the lack of a broad civil society or other organisations capable of producing social capital. Although the idea that a vibrant civil society and the social capital it creates are indispensable for democratic consolidation has been seriously challenged recently (Berman, 2009; Crespo, 2007; Encarnación, 2001; Hamann, 2003), there is no doubt that a social consensus in favour of democracy has to exist in order for it to be consolidated. It was argued in the sixth chapter that

in the case of the Spanish transition – characterised by a distinct lack of broad social mobilisations, civil society engagement or a strong democratic history – membership to the EEC performed the role of a ‘guarantor’ of democratic consolidation at social level that is usually attributed to a strong civil society.

In short, despite the comparatively low levels of social participation and civil society engagement in Spain, the legitimacy that its new democratic regime drew from membership into the EEC worked as a guarantee that the elites would not deviate from the democratic path – yet another function that is commonly attributed to a strong civil society. What is more, much as it did with the elites, the strong democratic conditionality the EEC set on membership meant that the social ‘consensus’ in favour of democracy would not be broken. At the same time, evidence suggests that the pro-European consensus at social level in Spain had to do with more than just mere calculations on material gains. Certainly access to the European market and considerable aid played an important part consolidating a pro-European consensus at social level, but there is evidence to suggest there was a sociocultural (or a matter of identity) dimension to this phenomenon. At social level, joining Europe was partly about Spain bridging the development gap with as much as it was about ‘reclaiming’ its place in Europe. The fact that as early as the mid 1990s there were more Spaniards supporting European integration than Spaniards believing Spain was benefiting economically from European membership indicates that support for Europe in Spain cannot be due solely to material calculations.

At the opposite end, NAFTA, far from working as a guarantee of the regime’s commitment to democracy, was, at the end of the day, an agreement negotiated and signed by a nondemocratic government. Although the context of NAFTA did open the door for some new civil society organisations to emerge, NAFTA failed to provide the sort of democratic reference the EEC provided for Spain. The fact, however, that there seems to be no clear sociocultural dimension to NAFTA does not mean that this could not (or cannot in the future) have been developed. Again, the European experience elucidates how, despite some immense differences in values and attitudes (to some extent ‘cultural’ differences), some of the different member states have developed something like a common (overarching) European identity that evokes a certain degree of loyalty. This ‘sociocultural’ aspect of the European integration process played some part in creating a pro-democratic consensus at social level in Spain.

Throughout this thesis, then, we have seen how the prospect of gaining access to European institutions was probably as influential in the democratisation of Spain as the actual process of institutional adaptation after accession. There is little doubt that the actual process of integration with Europe at least partially transformed the internal dynamics of the Spanish state, thus shaping Spanish democracy (Fishman, 2003). In a wider sense, however, European integration

also influenced the transition to democracy in Spain by providing a broad incentive to democratise (a yet to be compromised 'democratic clause' ensures all prospective members fully understand a democratic regime is a *sin qua non* for integration), as well as by transforming institutions, dynamics and the distribution of resources within the state. Thus,

'The EU enlargement process enhances both linkage and leverage in the aspiring candidate countries, as membership entails a high level of integration and policy coordination, with regulations encompassing virtually every aspect of democratic governance. EU political conditionality [also] differs from that of other multilateral organisation in many ways' (Levitsky and Way, 2005: 27).

In fewer words, despite the intricate dynamics of the process of European integration and of Spain's democratisation process, the Spanish case is rather straightforward. European integration was, above all, an incentive to democratise both for the elites and the general population. This incentive narrowed the available options to the elites during the democratic transitions, as well as 'guaranteeing' social support for democracy despite Spain's low levels of social participation and civil society engagement. What is more, economic integration with Europe played a part in Spain's socioeconomic development and thus, following modernisation theory's main tenet, contributed towards the sort of structural transformations that make democracy an ever-likelier outcome. At the opposite end, although NAFTA may have contributed to Mexico's economic growth (still debatable), the shrinking of the central state and the relative weakening of the PRI regime – albeit almost accidentally – this thesis has emphasised how despite having transformed Mexico's structural context, internationalisation through NAFTA failed to shape this transformation in a way conducive to democracy.

Of course the way internationalisation interacted with the Spanish and Mexican democratisations was not always, as we have seen throughout this thesis, entirely straightforward. In the case of Spain, we also have to acknowledge that there is a lot to be said about the EU's own need to improve its own democratic functioning, and that not every aspect of Europeanisation is going to lead to an increase in the quality of the member states' democracies. In this sense, there is much to be said about the widely debated issue of the EU's 'democratic deficit'; are the EU's democratic credentials 'well within the norms of advanced industrial democracies' (Moravcsik, 2004: 338)? Or is the EU actually taking power away from the electorate? The issues relating to the EU's democratic deficit cannot be simply ignored. The multiple concerns regarding the supposed influence the EU has had in strengthening the executive power over national parliamentary overview, or the apparent weakness of the European Parliament relative to the non-elected Council, or the argument that the EU is simply 'too far' (psychologically and institutionally) from the average voter and that the 'two thirds'

majority voting leads to legislation being passed on countries that would otherwise not accept it (Follesdal and Hix, 2006: 534-537) cannot be ignored. In the specific case of Spain, has the EU institutional framework led, for instance, to an unwanted neoliberalisation of the Spanish state? The *Indignados* movement that gained so much prominence in 2010 was quick to jump on the Euro-bashing (German in particular) bandwagon, and condemned attempts to reach pacts within the Eurozone that would strengthen its fiscal coordination. The readiness with which some sectors of Spanish society found a European dimension in their calls for 'real democracy' is evidence enough that not everything in this relationship is rosy.

At the same time, to say that NAFTA and the EU partially shaped Mexico's and Spain's transitions to democracy, is not the same as saying that domestic factors did not feature at the forefront of their transitions. Domestic factors, to a great extent, explain the divergent outcomes in the democratisation of both countries. A lot of the responsibility (or blame), for instance, has to be placed on the political elites and political parties in Mexico and Spain. There is no doubt that in Spain the memory of the civil war (Aguilar, 1997), the capacity of the political parties to build new democratic identities and mobilise society when needed (Ortega Ortiz, 2008), the key role King Juan Carlos played during the transition (Gilmour, 1985), the clear effects socioeconomic development had in transforming Spanish society (Balfour, 2000: 277; Tusell, 2005: 205; Viñas, 1999: 246), the structural constraints on elite choices (Colomer, 1991 and 1995), along with many other domestic considerations, explain to a great extent the democratic transformation of the Spanish state. In a similar vein, in Mexico the highly institutionalised nature of the PRI regime (Ortega Ortiz, 2001 and 2008), the long and protracted transition that was fought almost exclusively in the electoral arena (Dresser, 2005; Merino, 2003), the exaggerated role political parties now have and the lack of incentives for them to transform the rules of the game (Aguayo Quezada, 2010a: 132), as well as the many shortcomings of Mexico's political leadership (Aguayo Quezada, 2010a; Aristegui, 2009 and 2010), all partly explain why Mexico's transition was less successful than Spain's.

Yet, despite the many real challenges the EU is now facing in the democratic front, and the clear prominence of domestic considerations when explaining transitions to democracy, this thesis has showed, if further proof was indeed needed, that the international context in transitions to democracy matters, and it matters even more when transitions to democracy are taking place at a time when internationalisation projects increase their linkage and their sensitivity to leverage. What this thesis has also demonstrated is that linkage in itself may not be enough, and that the actions and attitudes of foreign democratic centres can play a key role in shaping, if not always making, democracies.

7.1. Epilogue: Lessons from Mexico and Spain

Democracy promotion/assistance, although by no means a new occurrence¹, has become a widely discussed and researched subject in academia in the last fifteen to twenty years. The military interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan – and the subsequent attempts to establish (some may say impose) democratic regimes – have only strengthened this interest. Since then, we could say that the debate surrounding the morality, practicality and levels of success that can be achieved by promoting democracy became a matter not only of academic interest but also of widespread contemporary significance (Plattner, 2009: 1). Regardless of the reason, there is little doubt that the United States, the EU and other democratic centres are now considering democracy promotion as a key foreign policy objective, and that the academic interest in the international dimension of democratisation has increased accordingly (Brown and Kaufman, 2011: 241). At the same time, this recent interest in the international dimension of democratisation has led to a number of new approaches that account for the international as an explanatory variable. Having said this though, this thesis was not necessarily an attempt to analyse the democracy promotion/assistance policies or strategies of the EEC/EU and the United States, but rather, as said in the second chapter, to analyse the effects of internationalisation projects (understood as the political effects of joining the international economy (Garrett and Lang, 1995)) on the transitions to democracy in Spain and Mexico. Although a recent paradigm of ‘democracy promotion by integration’ in the EU (Dimitrova and Pridham, 2004) seems to be emerging, this was not entirely developed when Spain applied for membership of the EEC in 1977. In a way, Europe’s influence in the Spanish transition came as a consequence of its attempts to join the EEC rather than as a specific long-term strategy. Indeed we have to consider that, as the Mexican case elucidates, democracy promotion (or democracy support/assistance) is not an inherent characteristic of internationalisation. Policies and/or activities carried out by democratic regimes that promote democracy around the world are not necessarily a by-product of increased internationalisation or ‘globalisation’. We could, however, argue that, in a way, powerful democratic states cannot avoid their propensity to become ‘paternalistic empires’ as they ‘generously’ try to export democracy (Pangle, 2009: 17-19). The claim that democracy has emerged triumphant from the battle of ideas around the world (Bermeo, 2009: 243-245) only adds to the argument that ‘the soul of liberal republicanism has from its inception, in varying degrees, been animated by a dedication to the liberation of all humanity through the spread or export of liberal republicanism’ (Pangle, 2009: 31). It is debatable whether or not democracies have to engage in direct activities that seek to export democracy or if democracies should settle with setting a good example. What seems clear to me, though, is that democracy promotion, assistance or diffusion is not necessarily linked with internationalisation projects or projects of regional integration.

¹ In fact, it has been argued that democracy has a tendency to ‘export itself’ which can be traced back to the very first ‘democratic’ regimes of ancient Athens (Pangle, 2009: 17-19).

In fact, it has been argued that efforts (mainly from the United States) to assist democracy and shape economic policy ‘often work at cross purposes [...] support for neo-liberal economic reforms has left legacies that undercut the political reforms that democracy assistance promotes’ (Bermeo, 2009: 259). The two cases analysed here more than elucidate this point. Mexico’s internationalisation was carried out within a framework of North American economic integration where democracy promotion/assistance was all but non-existent, whilst Spain’s integration with Western Europe was an internationalisation project that had democratisation at its core. These are two extreme cases that epitomise just how unconnected democracy promotion can be from internationalisation projects; the influence internationalisation may have on processes of democratisation is not necessarily linked to efforts to promote democracy – albeit these can, as in the case of Spain, be a part of the process. With this in mind, I believe there is an opportunity to, in the future, develop structured comparisons that analyse the impact models of ‘democratisation by integration’ (even outside Europe) have *vis a vis* strategies of democracy promotion in the traditional sense. Without obviously developing a detailed analysis or a comprehensive literature review at this stage, I believe that a comparison between the different approaches taken by the EU to democracy promotion in the Balkans, or the United States took in Central America *vis a vis* Mexico, offer interesting cases to analyse these dynamics further. According to Thomas Carothers, for example, the ‘US and European pro-democracy groups mounted a well-coordinated and well funded (to the tune of \$60 to \$100 million) aid campaign to help Serbian civic and political groups mount an electoral challenge to Milosevic’ (2006: 60-61)², yet democracy promotion/assistance in Serbia arguably did not look at the time like a policy framed within a wider process of internationalisation. Serbia has just achieved candidate status for EU accession (March 2012) and does not look likely to achieve full membership until at least 2015 (*BBC* 4/7/2012). These are of course mere conjectures at this stage, but – without ignoring the many particularities of the Serbian case of course (*The Economist* 3/2/2012) – I believe it could be a good case study to research in the future. What is more, there is a potential to learn from the Mexican and Spanish experiences in this regard.

Let us consider that – despite the real surge in policies implemented by the United States, the EU and other democratic actors aimed at exporting, supporting, promoting or assisting³

² Other sources claim the United States has spent over \$300 million supporting Serbia’s democratisation efforts (Finkel *et al.*, 2008: 69).

³ Nancy Bermeo makes a distinction between ‘1) the *export of democracy*, meaning wholesale system transfer [almost impossible to achieve]; 2) *democracy promotion*, meaning the ideational project of framing democracy as the best form of government; and 3) *democracy assistance*, meaning support for the various interrelated institutions and behaviours, which emerging democracies are thought to require’ (2009: 243). This is a distinction, though, that is not often made; for all intents and purposes democracy promotion and democracy assistance are used as synonyms while export of democracy is rarely mentioned in the literature. Nevertheless, it is important to understand that there are different ways to promote democracy.

democracy – the level of success of democracy promotion strategies remains questionable. On the one hand, aid aimed at developing democracy in a specific country can be counterproductive if the host governments are not committed to reform (Carothers, 1997: 97). In some cases attempts to promote democracy in a country can be used by some autocratic strongmen to justify repressive practices under the rhetoric of protecting sovereignty; Russia under Putin being, according to Thomas Carothers (2006: 62), a good example. On the other hand, it has been argued that the effect of democracy assistance (as defined by Bermeo) strategies can have a clear impact on democratisation. According to the study carried out by Steven Finkel, Anibal Pérez-Liñán and Mitchell Seligson (with results published in 2006, 2007 and 2008), the investment of \$1million is expected to increase the typical rate of democratisation by 0.026 per cent in the Freedom House index (2007: 424) in any given year. The same study claims that \$10 million invested in democracy promotion would normally raise the index in the Polity IV scale by just under half a point (0.05)(*ibid*). In short, the study claims that for every \$10 million USAID invests specifically in democracy assistance, a country is predicted to improve their Freedom House democracy index by 0.25 points. Although this study does control the impact of other assistance related variables, I believe there are other interactions during internationalisation projects – as this thesis has demonstrated – that cannot be explained as simply being the by-product of democracy promotion strategies, and that cannot be explained by only looking at the dollars and cents spent on promoting democracy. As we have seen in the cases of Mexico and Spain, internationalisation can be an incentive to democratise at all levels. What is more, the changes in the interaction between a democratising country and the international community can have many repercussions for the democratisation process that cannot be accurately explained by ‘one-way’ models of democracy promotion.

Although democracy promotion/assistance is ‘far from being a magic elixir’ (Carothers, 2006: 63), when correctly carried out it may make a real difference. Yet, there may be other instances when democracy promotion may work a lot better within a framework of internationalisation projects. It certainly has to be acknowledged that the EU’s model of ‘democratisation by integration’ is unique in several ways. The EU’s model of democracy promotion (within Europe of course) is different because it affects a much broader set of areas of governance and institutions than any other strategy of democracy promotion or membership to any other IO, it holds a clear commitment to conditioning membership on democratic transformations and has a number of tools to ensure these conditions are met (yearly Progress Reports for candidate countries), and it explicitly promotes – since the mid 1990s – a very specific type of democracy (the way the EU’s definition of democracy goes beyond a minimalist understanding and includes social, economic, political and cultural rights) (Dimitrova and Pridham, 2004: 94-97). Despite the many obvious particularities of the EU, however, there are lessons that can be learned from its unique model of democracy promotion. Although its true that the EU has

greater pull than any other IO in terms of the benefits membership entails, which allows the EU to set strict criteria for accession, the importance the Mexican regime gave to NAFTA probably put the project of North American integration on a similar footing. NAFTA probably meant more for Mexico than membership to any other IO has meant for any other democratising country outside of Europe. Understanding the limitations of NAFTA (mainly the lack of a strong institutional framework) as well as its similarities to the EU, however, can help us understand how some elements of the 'democratisation by integration model' can be applied elsewhere. Indeed, an important lesson.

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